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Brahmaputra dam will not affect India, Bangladesh: China

Press Trust of India
BEIJING

Mao Ning

China on Friday defended its plan to build the world's largest dam on the Brahmaputra in Tibet, saying the project would not "negatively affect" the lower riparian states of India and Bangladesh and that safety issues had been addressed through decades of studies. China on Wednesday approved the dam's construction, close to the Indian border. At a media briefing, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning played down apprehensions.

The $137-billion project is located in the ecologically fragile Himalayan region, along a tectonic plate boundary where earthquakes occur frequently.

Ms. Mao said China had studied in depth hydropower development in the region for decades, and safeguard measures had been taken to ensure the project's security and environment protection.

"The project will not negatively affect the lower reaches," she said referring to the concerns in India and Bangladesh.

"China will continue to maintain communication with countries at the lower reaches through existing channels and step up cooperation on disaster prevention and relief for the benefit of the people by the river," Ms. Mao said.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 12

Manmohan's funeral: Congress demands rites at memorial site

Home Ministry announces state funeral with full military honours at a public cremation ground today; Congress alleges 'deliberate insult to the first Sikh Prime Minister of India'; Kharge had spoken to Modi and Shah for allocation of land

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Union Home Ministry, in an order on Friday, said former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh would be accorded a state funeral with full military honours at the Nigam Bodh Ghat, a public cremation ground in north Delhi, on Saturday.

The Congress, which had demanded a funeral in a place where a memorial to Dr. Singh could be built, called it a "deliberate insult to the first Sikh Prime Minister of India". "The people of our country are simply unable to understand why the Government of India could not find a location for his cremation and memorial that is befitting of his global stature, record of outstanding achievements, and exemplary service to the nation for decades," Congress communication chief Jairam Ramesh said in a post on X. "This is nothing but a deliberate insult to the first Sikh Prime Minister of India, Dr. Manmohan Singh."

Prime Minister Narendra Modi pays his last respects to former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in New Delhi on Friday. ANI

The government decision came hours after Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge had spoken to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah. Congress general secretaries K.C. Venugopal and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra had taken up the issue of a memorial with Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, an informed source said.

The source told *The Hindu* that government officials had conveyed it to Mr. Kharge as well as the former PM's family that land for a memorial would be earmarked in the next few days, but it would not be the place where the funeral took place. In fact, it was the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance government that had decided to have a common memorial ground – Rashtriya Smriti Sthal – near the Raj Ghat because of a shortage of land next to the Yamuna in central Delhi.

The government's response came after Mr. Kharge had followed up his telephonic conversations with a letter to the PM to press for a funeral site where a memorial can be built. "This is in keeping with such tradition of having memorials to statesmen and former Prime Ministers at the very place of their funerals," he said.

The Congress chief said Manmohan Singh holds a highly revered place in the psyche of the country and the people of this nation, and his contributions and achievements were phenomenal. "Coming from a humble background and having experienced the pains and sufferings of Partition, it is through his sheer grit and determination that he rose to become one of the leading statesmen of the world," he said in his letter.

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NEARBY

Singh, a hero of the middle class

BENGALURU
Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, who passed away on December 26, has largely contributed to the expansion of the size of the Indian middle class. » Page 8

Chargesheet filed against Munirathna

BENGALURU
The SIT recently filed a chargesheet against MLA Munirathna on charges of rape and attempts to infect others with HIV. The chargesheet includes accounts of 146 witnesses and 850 documents as evidence. » Page 3

PROPERTYPLUS » PAGE 7

SC gives Punjab govt. 24 hours to hospitalise farmer on hunger strike

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

An "anxious" Supreme Court on Friday gave the Punjab government 24 hours to act on medical advice to hospitalise farmer leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal, whose indefinite fast is posing a danger to his life.

Mr. Dallewal has been on a hunger strike at the Khanauri boundary since November 26 to press the Centre to accept the agitating farmers' demands, including a legal guarantee of minimum support price (MSP) for crops.

Farmer leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal has been on a hunger strike at the Khanauri boundary in Sangrur district since November 26. PTI

Appearing before a Vacation Bench of Justices Surya Kant and Sudhanshu Dhulia, the Punjab government said its efforts to move Mr. Dallewal to a hospital had been met with stiff resistance.

State Advocate-General Gurminder Singh said that a delegation of eight Cabinet Ministers had made no progress in convincing him to go to a hospital. The farmer leader had made it clear he would not budge until the Centre opened a dialogue with the farmers.

The State warned that forcibly shifting him to a hospital may trigger "physical jostling" with farmers at the protest site, which may prove extremely risky for the septuagenarian leader.

The Punjab Chief Secretary and Director-General of Police are facing contempt action in the Supreme Court for not hospitalising Mr. Dallewal despite repeated orders, the latest on December 20.

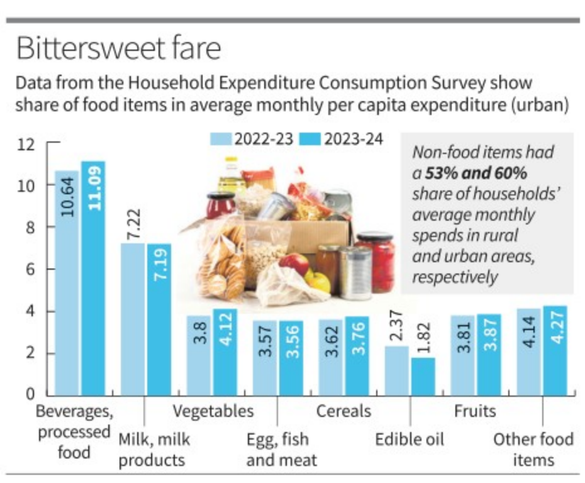
CONTINUED ON » PAGE 12

Average household spending rose 3.5% through Aug. 2023-July 2024: Survey

Vikas Dhoot
NEW DELHI

India's average household consumption spends on a per capita basis rose about 3.5% in real terms through August 2023 to July 2024 from a year ago, as per the Household Consumption Expenditure Survey, and the Centre said this signals a decline in consumption inequality and a narrowing gap between urban and rural spends.

The initial findings, which are used to assess trends in economic well-being, estimate poverty levels and update the basket and weightages of consumer goods and services used to formulate the Consumer Price Index (CPI) that measures retail inflation, were released by the Union Statistics Ministry on Friday.



This is the second year in a row that the HCES was conducted, after a 11-year hiatus as the government junked the results of the 2017-18 survey citing "quality" concerns about the data. "Sustained momentum in rural consumption continues as urban-rural gap narrows down further in 2023-24 from the level of 2022-23," the Ministry said.

In real terms, the average rural Monthly Per Capita Expenditure or MPCE rose 3.53% over 2022-23 levels to ₹2,079 and grew at a fractionally slower pace of 3.48% for urban households to ₹6,996. The 2022-23 HCES had revealed a 3.5% compounded annual growth in rural spends over 11 years since 2011-12, with urban households clocking a 3% growth.

"Consistent with the trend observed in 2022-23, non-food items remain the major contributor to the household's average monthly expenditure in 2023-24 with about 53% and 60% share in MPCE in rural and urban areas respectively," a fact sheet on the survey noted.

Despite the ratio of food spends to non-food spends suggesting a dip in expenditure on food and beverages, this was primarily due to a decline in spending on edible oils.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 12

GETTY IMAGES

Harry Brook: generational talent or simply at the vanguard of a generation?

The 25-year-old's ability to destroy bowling attacks is symbolic of how Test batting has changed — or certainly of how a Gen-Z batter perceives his craft. Australia's bouncy tracks and India's turners will tell us whether he is an all-timer or merely on the crest of the modern wave

Vivek Krishnan

"This is the big league. This is Test cricket. It will humble you as a player and person."

This was Dean Elgar, in September 2022, offering a gentle warning to Harry Brook on the eve of the latter's Test debut against South Africa at The Oval. The middle-order batter had hammered 140 for England Lions against the visiting Proteas at Canterbury a month earlier and was being talked up as an incredibly exciting prospect, but South Africa's then captain and seasoned pro seemed to be telling the budding rookie that Test cricket wouldn't be quite so easy.

Ready on arrival

Well, little did Elgar know that Brook would indeed make Test cricket look easy. That he would take to the big league like he had always belonged. That he would race to 2,281 runs after 24 Tests at an average of 58.48 and a strike rate of 88.37, with eight hundreds. That he would become the first England batter since Graham Gooch in 1990 to amass a triple ton. One that he would get to, against Pakistan in Multan in October, in just 310 deliveries, second only to Virender Sehwag's 278-ball effort against South Africa in Chennai in 2008.

Brook is also the third-fastest Englishman, behind Herbert Sutcliffe and Len Hutton, to 1,000 Test runs. Among his countrymen, only Sutcliffe, whose debut dates back to a century ago, got to 2,000 runs quicker than him.

Brook has done all of this while veering away from conventional wisdom about batting in the longest format requiring copious patience and a copybook defence. As a product of the new generation that has grown up consuming a considerable volume of T20 cricket, the 25-year-old, athletic and affable, lends weightage to scoring runs at a fast rate.

In essence, he fits right into the attacking philosophy espoused by captain Ben Stokes and coach Brendon McCullum. Although the circumstances of Brook's entry weren't ideal – Jonny Bairstow, in the form of his life, slipped on a golf course and fractured his left leg in a freak accident before the final Test of the English summer – the think-tank had little hesitation in thrusting the young Yorkshireman into the arc lights.

"There are just things that stand out about certain players, like the time they have at the crease, the shots they play," Stokes said at the time of Brook's induction.

The first inkling that the youngster can turn promise into performance came just a few months later in his second Test, against Pakistan in Rawalpindi, when he walloped 153 off 116 deliveries and deflated the host's morale altogether. A 65-ball 87 and two more hundreds on that tour as England whitewashed Pakistan set Brook firmly on his way.

Brook has been able to conjure up three-figure knocks that dovetail ball-striking flair with a calm temperament, indicating a distinct trait to thrive under pressure

As impressive as his numbers have been so far, it is his precious ability to take the game away from the opposition in a trice that turns heads and embodies what Bazball – the term attributed to England's unfettered approach under Stokes and McCullum – is all about.

Whether England is 20 for three on a green top in Manchester or 200 for three on a flat surface in Multan, Brook always looks for ways to mount the pressure back on the bowlers. That impulse has been buttressed by Stokes and McCullum creating an atmosphere where these young players have the cushion to attack without instantly bearing the consequences of failure.

Shifting emphasis

In a larger framework, Brook's style is also symbolic of how batting in Test cricket has transformed. Or certainly of how a Gen-Z batter perceives his craft. With the T20 format becoming an indispensable part of cricket's fabric, the emphasis even in the five-day game has increasingly swayed towards aggression. Glancing through the strike-rates of the top five run-getters in Tests this year is illuminating. All five are striking at above 60, with Root, who leads the list, being the 'slowest' at 63.38.

Even among the top 10 run-getters this year, only Kane Williamson and Dinesh Chandimal have strike-rates lower than 60. That Williamson is 34 and Chandimal 35 suggests they could be among the last relics of a more conservative approach. To comprehend the rapid shift, you only need to look at the corresponding numbers from, say, five years ago: only two players – David Warner and Quinton de Kock – had strike rates above 60 among the top 10 run-getters in 2019.

So far in Brook's flourishing career, he has never curbed his attacking instincts. His position at No. 5 is an ally too. Unlike the flamboyant Zak Crawley and Ben Duckett, who are put through the wringer at the top of the order, Brook's role mostly comes with the relative comfort of facing a slightly older ball. It allows him that much more liberty to counterattack.

It is not to say that Brook hasn't negotiated adverse conditions and situations. All of his three hundreds in New Zealand, most notably, have been on surfaces with a palpable tinge of green and with the team teetering on the abyss. From 21 for three in Wellington in 2023, 45 for three in Christchurch and 26 for three again in Wellington on the most recent tour, Brook was able to conjure up three-figure knocks that dovetailed ball-striking flair with a calm temperament, indicating a distinct trait to thrive under pressure.

Root, the only batter ahead of Brook in the ICC Test rankings, was lavish in praise of his teammate after the New Zealand series. "Brooky is far and away the best player in the world at the minute," he enthused. "He can absorb pressure, he can apply it. He can smack spin. He can smack seam."

Technical nuances

Brook's set-up at the crease aids his attacking verve. Perhaps akin to hitters in baseball, he tends to hold the willow high in the air as the bowler runs in, as opposed to tapping it on the turf, and doesn't have a pronounced back-and-across trigger movement. It seems to facilitate his devastating off-side play, his high and fast hands slashing at anything with a smidgen of width. Like with Australia's Travis Head who dons a similar role at No. 5, the margin of error while bowling to Brook is therefore minimal.

The acid test for Brook will arrive on the turners in India – he missed the series earlier this year due to personal reasons – and the bouncy surfaces in Australia. Though his average in Pakistan is an enviable 84.10 after six Tests, it must be said that his runs in the subcontinent have come on egregiously placid decks. When Pakistan did dish out spinning pitches for the last two Tests of the series in October after Brook's triple ton in the opener, his returns plummeted to 56 runs across four innings.

There's, of course, some time until England embarks on another tour of India. Before that, Brook will be scrutinised based on how he fares against India at home and Australia away over the next 12 months. If he continues to smash massive hundreds, his status as a generational talent will be beyond doubt. If not, he can always strive to improve while remembering Elgar's wise words: "This is Test cricket. It will humble you as a player and person."

STACKING UP

ATP Men's Top 15

#	Player	Age	Points	Events
1	Jannik Sinner	23	11,830	17
2	Alexander Zverev	27	7,915	21
3	Carlos Alcaraz	21	7,010	18
4	Taylor Fritz	27	5,100	22
5	Daniil Medvedev	28	5,030	17
6	Casper Ruud	26	4,255	25
7	Novak Djokovic	37	3,910	18
8	Andrey Rublev	27	3,760	27
9	Alex de Minaur	25	3,745	23
10	Grigor Dimitrov	33	3,350	19
11	Stefanos Tsitsipas	26	3,165	22
12	Tommy Paul	27	3,145	21
13	Holger Rune	21	3,025	23
14	Ugo Humbert	26	2,765	26
15	Jack Draper	23	2,685	22

Top Indians ▸

Sumit Nagal
Rank 98 ▲ No change

Mukund Sasikumar
Rank 368 ▼ 1 spot

WTA Women's Top 15

#	Player	Age	Points	Events
1	Aryna Sabalenka	26	9,416	21
2	Iga Swiatek	23	8,295	18
3	Coco Gauff	20	6,530	22
4	Jasmine Paolini	28	5,344	20
5	Qinwen Zheng	22	5,340	21
6	Elena Rybakina	25	5,171	20
7	Jessica Pegula	30	4,705	19
8	Emma Navarro	23	3,589	25
9	Daria Kasatkina	27	3,368	24
10	Barbora Krejcikova	29	3,214	17
11	Danielle Collins	31	3,178	19
12	Paula Badosa	27	2,908	20
13	Diana Shnaider	20	2,895	27
14	Anna Kalinskaya	26	2,743	20
15	Jelena Ostapenko	27	2,588	21

Top Indians ▸

Ankita Raina
Rank 286 ▲ 1 spot

Sahaja Yamalapalli
Rank 290 ▲ 21 spots

English Premier League Standings

#	Team	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
1	Liverpool	17	13	3	1	40	17	23	42
2	Chelsea	18	10	5	3	38	21	17	35
3	N. Forest	18	10	4	4	24	19	5	34
4	Arsenal	17	9	6	2	34	16	18	33
5	Newcastle	18	8	5	5	30	21	9	29
6	Bournemouth	18	8	5	5	27	21	6	29
7	Man. City	18	8	4	6	30	26	4	28
8	Fulham	18	7	7	4	26	23	3	28
9	Aston Villa	18	8	4	6	26	29	-3	28
10	Brighton	17	6	7	4	27	26	1	25
11	Tottenham	18	7	2	9	39	26	13	23
12	Brentford	17	7	2	8	32	32	0	23
13	West Ham	18	6	5	7	23	30	-7	23
14	Man. United	18	6	4	8	21	24	-3	22
15	Everton	17	3	8	6	15	22	-7	17
16	Crystal Palace	18	3	8	7	18	26	-8	17
17	Wolves	18	4	3	11	29	40	-11	15
18	Leicester City	18	3	5	10	22	40	-18	14
19	Ipswich Town	17	2	6	9	16	32	-16	12
20	Southampton	18	1	3	14	11	37	-26	6

Italian Serie A Standings

#	Team	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
1	Atalanta	17	13	1	3	42	19	23	40
2	Napoli	17	12	2	3	26	12	14	38
3	Inter Milan	16	11	4	1	42	15	27	37
4	Lazio	17	11	1	5	32	24	8	34
5	Fiorentina	16	9	4	3	29	13	16	31
6	Juventus	17	7	10	0	28	13	15	31
7	Bologna	16	7	7	2	23	18	5	28
8	AC Milan	16	7	5	4	25	16	9	26
9	Udinese	17	7	2	8	21	26	-5	23
10	Roma	17	5	4	8	23	23	0	19
11	Empoli	17	4	7	6	16	19	-3	19
12	Torino	17	5	4	8	17	22	-5	19
13	Genoa	17	3	7	7	14	26	-12	16
14	Lecce	17	4	4	9	11	29	-18	16
15	Parma	17	3	6	8	23	33	-10	15
16	Como	17	3	6	8	18	30	-12	15
17	Verona	17	5	0	12	21	40	-19	15
18	Cagliari	17	3	5	9	16	28	-12	14
19	Venezia	17	3	4	10	17	30	-13	13
20	Monza	17	1	7	9	15	23	-8	10

Spanish LaLiga Standings

#	Team	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
1	Atletico Madrid	18	12	5	1	33	12	21	41
2	Real Madrid	18	12	4	2	41	18	23	40
3	Barcelona	19	12	2	5	51	22	29	38
4	Athletic Bilbao	19	10	6	3	29	17	12	36
5	Villarreal	18	8	6	4	34	30	4	30
6	Real Mallorca	19	9	3	7	19	21	-2	30
7	Real Sociedad	18	7	4	7	16	13	3	25
8	Girona	18	7	4	7	26	25	1	25
9	Real Betis	18	6	7	5	21	22	-1	25
10	Osasuna	18	6	7	5	23	27	-4	25
11	Celta Vigo	18	7	3	8	27	28	-1	24
12	Rayo Vallecano	18	5	7	6	20	21	-1	22
13	Las Palmas	18	6	4	8	23	27	-4	22
14	Sevilla	18	6	4	8	20	27	-7	22
15	Leganes	18	4	6	8	17	28	-11	18
16	Alaves	18	4	5	9	21	30	-9	17
17	Getafe	18	3	7	8	11	15	-4	16
18	Espanyol	18	4	3	11	16	30	-14	15
19	Valencia	17	2	6	9	16	26	-10	12
20	Real Valladolid	18	3	3	12	12	37	-25	12

German Bundesliga Standings

#	Team	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
1	Bayern	15	11	3	1	47	13	34	36
2	Leverkusen	15	9	5	1	37	21	16	32
3	E. Frankfurt	15	8	3	4	35	23	12	27
4	RB Leipzig	15	8	3	4	24	20	4	27
5	Mainz	15	7	4	4	28	20	8	25
6	Dortmund	15	7	4	4	28	22	6	25
7	Werder Bremen	15	7	4	4	26	25	1	25
8	M'gladbach	15	7	3	5	25	20	5	24
9	SC Freiburg	15	7	3	5	21	24	-3	24
10	Stuttgart	15	6	5	4	29	25	4	23
11	Wolfsburg	15	6	3	6	32	28	4	21
12	Union Berlin	15	4	5	6	14	19	-5	17
13	FC Augsburg	15	4	4	7	17	32	-15	16
14	St Pauli	15	4	2	9	12	19	-7	14
15	TSG Hoffenheim	15	3	5	7	20	28	-8	14
16	Heidenheim	15	3	1	11	18	33	-15	10
17	Holstein Kiel	15	2	2	11	19	38	-19	8
18	Bochum	15	1	3	11	13	35	-22	6

Test Batting

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Joe Root	895	932
2	Harry Brook	876	898
3	Kane Williamson	867	919
4	Travis Head	825	884
5	Yashasvi Jaiswal	805	825
6	Kamindu Mendis	759	759
7	Temba Bavuma	753	753
8	Daryl Mitchell	725	804
9	Saud Shakeel	724	728
10	Steve Smith	721	947

Test Bowling

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Jasprit Bumrah	904	904
2	Kagiso Rabada	856	902
3	Josh Hazlewood	852	864
4	Pat Cummins	822	914
5	R. Ashwin	789	904
6	Matt Henry	782	782
7	Nathan Lyon	770	801
8	Prabath Jayasuriya	768	801
9	Noman Ali	759	759
10	Ravindra Jadeja	755	899

ODI Batting

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Babar Azam	795	898
2	Rohit Sharma	765	882
3	Shubman Gill	763	847
4	Virat Kohli	746	909
5	Heinrich Klaasen	743	757
6	Harry Tector	737	767
7	Daryl Mitchell	706	750
8	Rahmanullah Gurbaz	672	693
8	Shai Hope	672	728
10	Pathum Nissanka	671	728

ODI Bowling

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Rashid Khan	669	799
2	Kuldeep Yadav	665	760
3	Shaheen Afridi	662	696
4	Keshav Maharaj	654	741
4	Bernard Scholtz	654	659
6	Maheesh Theekshana	650	650
7	Jasprit Bumrah	645	838
8	Mohammed Siraj	643	736
9	Adam Zampa	635	698
10	Josh Hazlewood	634	727

T20I Batting

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Travis Head	855	884
2	Philip Salt	829	860
3	Tilak Varma	806	806
4	Suryakumar Yadav	788	910
5	Jos Buttler	717	726
6	Babar Azam	712	896
7	Yashasvi Jaiswal	706	779
8	Mohammad Rizwan	704	875
9	Reeza Hendricks	672	710
9	Pathum Nissanka	672	698

T20I Bowling

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Akeal Hosein	707	708
2	Adil Rashid	701	746
3	Wanindu Hasaranga	696	797
4	Adam Zampa	694	743
5	Maheesh Theekshana	684	684
6	Ravi Bishnoi	666	699
7	Rashid Khan	664	816
8	Arshdeep Singh	656	656
9	Gudakesh Motie	643	707
10	Mahedi Hasan	636	636

Year when star politicians faced sexual abuse charges

The first such case to come up was in March when the mother of a 17-year-old minor girl alleged Yediyurappa sexually harassed her daughter when they had been to his house seeking help

K.V. Aditya Bharadwaj
BENGALURU

One of the big hallmarks of 2024, was definitely the sexual abuse and harassment charges that surfaced against several high profile politicians including a former chief minister, a sitting member of parliament and three former ministers.

But in a case against ruling party MLA Vinay Kulkarni accused of rape and abduction, where the investigation is still underway, all the rest of the cases against former chief minister B. S. Yediyurappa, then MP from Hassan Prajwal Revanna, his brother MLC Suraj Revanna, his father H. D. Revanna and former minister and MLA Munirathna have been chargesheeted, by the Criminal Investigation Department (CID), in the same year. All the cases are being probed by teams led by Additional Director General of Police (ADGP) B. K. Singh.

The first such case to come up was in March when the mother of a 17-year-old minor girl alleged Mr. Yediyurappa sexually harassed her daughter when they had been to his house seeking help in February. A case was registered against him under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 and transferred to the CID, which filed a chargesheet against him in the case in June. The case is yet to come up for trial in the court.

Prajwal Revanna being taken to the CID office after he landed in Bengaluru. ANI

Days before Hassan went to parliamentary polls, several sexual clips allegedly of incumbent JDS MP Prajwal Revanna made the rounds in Hassan. Hours after the polling Prajwal Revanna fled the country. While the large cache of sex videos involved nearly 90 women, only four of them came forward to lodge a complaint.

One of the victims, a former house maid in Prajwal's house, alleged that his father and former minister H. D. Revanna also sexually harassed her. He was also booked in the case. One of the victims, seen resisting Prajwal's advances but still raped on video, was allegedly abducted at the behest of Mr. Revanna to prevent her from testifying against Prajwal. She was rescued by the SIT and hours later Mr. Revanna was arrested from the house of former prime minister H. D. Deve Gowda. He was later released on bail.

Prajwal returned to the country on May 30 and was arrested. He has been in prison ever since. There were four rape cases registered against him and chargesheets have been filed in all four cases. His bail petitions in these cases were rejected even by the Supreme Court in November. Amidst these allegations, Prajwal's elder brother Suraj Revanna was accused of sexually abusing a male JDS worker. SIT has chargesheeted him as well.

Meanwhile, what started out as a case of caste abuse against a former councillor by BJP MLA Munirathna, opened floodgates against him in September. A total of four cases, including charges of rape, honey trap, attempt to get people infected with HIV infected blood, were booked against him. He has been chargesheeted in two cases, including for rape. He is presently out on bail.

In October, a woman alleged abduction and rape by Congress MLA from Dharwad Vinay Kulkarni, even as he filed a counter-complaint against the owner of a private Kannada news channel of blackmail. The case was transferred to the CID, and the probe is still on.

Rewind 2024

A terror attack and four gruesome murders that shocked the city

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

In the year gone by, 2024, Bengaluru again became a target of a terror attack after a decade. The case where Kannada film actor Darshan was arrested for the gruesome murder of one of his fans, Renukaswamy, hogged much limelight. The city was also rocked by three murders where working women were killed by their male friends.

Video grab images of Rameshwaram Cafe in Brookefield after an improvised explosive device went off there on March 1, 2024. FILE PHOTO

Rameshwaram blast

An Improvised Explosive Device (IED) kept in a bag at The Rameshwaram Cafe, in Brookefield, exploded injuring nine persons on March 1. The last such terror attack in the city was on December 28, 2014 in Church Street, that killed one person.

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) that took over the probe into the case arrested two key terror accused Abdul Matheen Taaha and Mussavir Hussain Shazib, both hailing from Thirthahalli, from the outskirts of Kolkata in April. CCTV footage from the restaurant and its surroundings confirmed that Shazib was the one who planted the IED.

With the arrest of the duo, on the run from 2020, the notorious Thirthahalli terror module is said to have been neutralised. The duo came on the radar of security agencies in January 2020, when the state police busted the Al Hind module where a group of Muslim radicals from Karnataka and Tamil Nadu were allegedly trying to establish a Islamic State-like insurgency. While the rest were arrested, Taaha and Shazib absconded and allegedly put together a module with other radicalized youths in Thirthahalli. This module was allegedly involved in a terror graffiti case in Mangaluru, a trial blast case in Shivamogga and a failed cooker blast attack in Mangaluru in 2022.

Darshan arrested

The case that hogged the most attention in 2024 was the murder of Renukaswamy in June. An unidentified body was found in a drain in Kamakshipalya, and a day later four people turned up at the police station confessing to the murder. However, their interrogation led the police to the doors of Kannada film actor Darshan and his partner Pavitra Gowda. A sordid tale of online sexual harassment, abduction, torture, murder and a coverup unravelled.

Renukaswamy had allegedly been sending lewd messages and explicit videos to Pavitra Gowda on Instagram. Angered by this, Darshan allegedly got him abducted from Chitradurga, got him to a shed in Pattanagere and allegedly beat him up which eventually killed him. A total of 17 accused were arrested and chargesheeted in the case.

Darshan was granted interim bail for six weeks in October on medical grounds. Before the six weeks ended, he was granted bail by the High Court on December 13.

Three cases where working women were killed by their male friends underscored the vulnerabilities faced by women in the city.

Three murders

In a particularly gruesome case, a woman's highly decomposed body chopped into 52 pieces was found stuffed in a refrigerator in Vyalikawal in September. The deceased Mahalakshmi, 29, from a migrant family from Nepal, was working at a mall and one of her colleagues turned out to be her killer. Before the police could reach him, Mukti Ranjan Roy, ended his life in Odisha.

In a similar vein, a vlogger from Assam Maya Gogoi, 19, was found dead at a service apartment in Indiranagar where she checked into with her male friend in November. Police arrested the accused Aarav Hanoi, 22, whom she met online through a dating app.

Earlier in July, Kruti Kumari, 24, hailing from Bihar was stabbed to death at a PG accommodation in Koramangala by a man who barged into the facility.

The accused Abhishekh Ghosi, 23, from Madhya Pradesh, was upset over Kruti Kumari's roommate who had broken up with him. He reportedly came to attack his former girlfriend and attacked Kruti Kumari instead when he did not find her.

Police personnel level corruption charge against inspector

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Police personnel serving at Electronics City Police Station have recently written a complaint against their inspector, accusing him of corruption, being "hand-in-glove" with rowdy sheeters and being irregular to the station. City Police Commissioner B. Dayananda has ordered for a probe into the allegations.

The complaint alleges that the inspector has fixed "monthly payments" from several commercial establishments. They have also alleged that the inspector hosts several "anti-social elements" in his chamber and that they come and sit in his chamber even when he is not there and order around police personnel to serve them tea. They alleged that the inspector pulled them up for refusing to serve them.

They alleged that the inspector hosts several 'anti-social elements' in his chamber

This is not an isolated incident. In fact, in the last month alone, personnel posted at Ramamurthy Nagar, Sadashivanagar and Byatarayanapura Police Stations have petitioned the Commissioner against inspectors posted at these stations. Probes have been underway in all four cases, sources said.

However, a senior police official in the city claimed most of these complaints were "frivolous" and emerged out of tussles among the staff. Admitting to some level of both corruption and favouritism at the station level, he said these issues often led to frustration among sections of the personnel. "After one group of personnel petitioned the Commissioner, other stations also seem to be taking the same road," he said. Terming the series of incidents as frivolous, a senior police officer said that the tussle among the staff led to this incidents. He also admitted that there is some level of corruption and favouritism at the station level.

Two police personnel suspended for tipping off drug peddler

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Two police personnel posted with Byatarayanapura Police Station, have been suspended for allegedly tipping off a drug peddler of an impending raid helping her flee.

As part of the special drive against narcotics ahead of the New Year's Eve, Byatarayanapura Police raided a hideout of notorious ganja peddler Meharunnisa, in Shamanna Garden in the second week of December. However, she had fled the place minutes before the police got there and the raid failed.

The probe has also uncovered certain monetary transactions between the trio, sources said

Call Details Record

The police got her Call Details Record (CDR) only to find Kumar, a head constable and Annappa Kittur, a constable, of their own station, being in touch with her constantly over a longer period of time. The duo was transferred out and a probe was initiated against them. Police investigations have now revealed that the duo had tipped off Meharunnisa of the impending raid and the probe has also uncovered certain monetary transactions between the trio, sources said. The two police personnel have been suspended now.

Meharunnisa was tracked down and arrested last week. The police recovered 38 kilos of ganja from her.

Metro timings extended for New Year's Eve

The last trains will depart from all terminal stations at 2 a.m. on January 1, 2025. FILE PHOTO

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) has announced extended metro services on the Purple and Green Lines to cater to New Year's Eve celebrations on December 31.

The last trains will depart from all terminal stations at 2 a.m. on January 1, 2025, while the final train from Nadaprabhu Kempegowda metro station (Majestic) will leave at 2.40 a.m. To accommodate the festive rush, trains will operate at 10-minute intervals from 11 p.m. on December 31 until the extended service ends, according to BMRCL release.

In a bid to manage the large crowds expected on M.G. Road, BMRCL has decided to close the M.G. Road metro station for entry and exit from 11 p.m. on December 31. Passengers are advised to use the nearby Trinity and Cubbon Park metro stations instead. Those travelling after 11 p.m. can purchase a ₹50 return journey paper ticket, which will be available at all metro stations starting at 8 a.m. on December 31. Regular QR code tickets and metro cards will also remain valid for travel.

BMRCL has issued a boarding advisory to prevent overcrowding at specific stations. Commuters heading towards Whitefield and Silk Institute are encouraged to use Trinity Metro Station, while those travelling towards Challaghatta and Madavara should board from Cubbon Park metro station.

Independent publishers in Karnataka unhappy as India Post decides to withdraw its 'Book Packet' service

It had helped many publishers send books to their customers with its nominal postage charge; alternative options cost almost 50% more

Jahnavi T. R.
BENGALURU

Nithesh Kuntady, an independent book publisher from Bengaluru, visited a post office in his neighbourhood last week to use India Post's 'Book Packet' service (used to send books across the country).

But he was shocked at being informed that the service had been abruptly stopped, and he had to 'Registered Post' the book instead.

On December 18, India Post decided to withdraw its 'Book Packet' service, which had helped many independent book publishers send books to their customers with its nominal postage charge. With the alternative options costing almost 50% more than the Book Packet service, publishers in Karnataka are worried if their customers will be okay with the added postage charges.

India Post - Bengaluru General Post Office, on Raj Bhavan Road in Bengaluru. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Difference in charge

"With the Book Packet service, we could send a 200-page book for around ₹20-25 anywhere across India. Even if the weight of the book were more, the price would increase only nominally, and we never had to shell out more than ₹30 to post them. But now, we have to look at other options like Speed Post or Registered Post," said Mr. Kuntady.

While Speed Post is cheaper for publishers within a 200-kilometre radius (around ₹36 - ₹37), it becomes expensive beyond that. In this case, publishers choose Registered Post, which costs around ₹45.

"The weight-wise jump in both Speed and Registered post is too much. So far, we have been taking shipping charges of ₹30 from customers, as we did not have to wrap our books. Now, as we must wrap the books and then pay more for shipping, we will have to charge ₹50 from customers as a shipping charge. As we do not know if customers are willing to pay this extra charge, this move can potentially affect knowledge distribution," Mr. Kuntady said.

These changes in postal services are due to the Post Office Act of 2023, which replaced the Indian Post Office Act of 1898. The new Act came into effect on June 18.

"The Book Packet service has been merged with Book Registered Post in accordance with the new regulations. It is a matter of consolidation. We know that customers are not fully aware of this yet. We will publicise it through social media and other channels of communication," Chief Post Master General (CPMG), Karnataka Circle, S. Rajendra Kumar, told *The Hindu*. He said that the concession offered on posting periodicals continues.

Independent publishers in Karnataka usually receive their orders from north Karnataka districts, like Belagavi, Vijayapura, and Ballari, as well as rural areas in other districts. Although private courier options are now available, and their prices are almost on a par with India Post's, their limited reach and lack of proper tracking services discourage publishers from choosing them.

"I have sent over 10,000 book parcels in the last five years via India Post and have not had even one complaint. Their service and network are so good. We can track our packets online. Even for our customers, it is easy to receive their parcels as mail carriers do not change frequently, unlike courier services. Even if the books are not delivered, we receive them back in two to three days via India Post, but private services are not that diligent," said Ranganath from Nudi Pustaka.

He also remarked that he has been advising his customers to choose their books over, say, a week and get them shipped together instead of ordering one at a time to save on shipping charges.

‘Chess imprisoned me with its beauty; now my life’s mission is to reproduce myself’

In this freewheeling conversation, Maurice Ashley, the world’s first Black Grandmaster, talks about falling in love with the game, making history, launching his commentary career in the Kremlin, and working to remove barriers to ensure that young talent from under-served communities can emulate his success

INTERVIEW

Maurice Ashley

P.K. Ajith Kumar

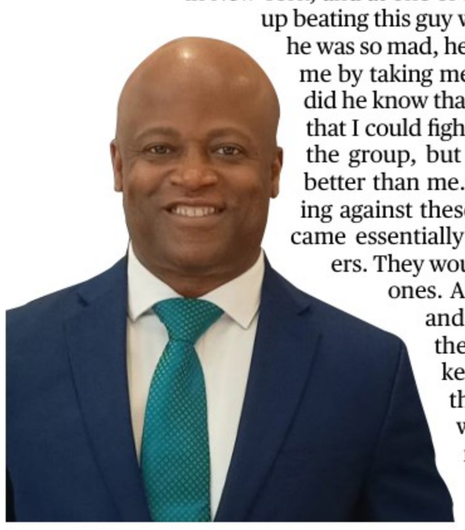
Maurice Ashley’s sister Alicia is a former World boxing champion. His brother Devon is a former World kickboxing champion. But he chose chess to make his mark and created history: in 1999, he became the world’s first-ever Black Grandmaster. During the World Chess Championship match between Ding Liren and D. Gukesh, Ashley was a familiar face – and voice – as the television presenter and moderator at the press conferences. Excerpts from an interview with the Jamaica-born American Grandmaster in Singapore:

How do you look back at your life, as someone who broke through the glass ceiling?

I learnt chess in Jamaica as an eight-year-old, or maybe I was nine. I remember surprising everybody by discovering the four-move checkmate. I just figured out the scholar’s mate. But I didn’t do any chess again for another six years. When I was 14, two years after we moved to the United States, I saw a friend in school playing chess. And then I saw a chess book in the library and the love affair started. I remember just seeing the strategies and tactics. The positions, the diagrams. I played with my friend. He crushed me again. I taught myself chess. I had no coach until I was 21 and my rating was 2400. I just studied like a complete maniac. I learnt chess history and about all the world champions. I became like a PhD student of the game.

At that time, were there many from the African-American community that played chess?

There were, thankfully, people who played in the park. And a group of men – they called themselves the Black Bear School – who played chess. They were the reason I became 2400, because they were all 2200. I met them at the park in New York, and at one of their homes. I ended up beating this guy who knew them. And he was so mad, he wanted to humiliate me by taking me to this group. Little did he know that I was tough enough that I could fight a couple of them in the group, but most of them were better than me. So I ended up playing against these men, and they became essentially my sparring partners. They would crush me, the top ones. And I would go home and study some more, then come back. I just kept going. As long as there existed people who were better than me, I wanted to get better.



P.K. AJITH KUMAR

I taught myself chess. I had no coach until I was 21 and my rating was 2400. I just studied like a complete maniac. I became like a PhD student of the game

When did you start thinking of becoming a Grandmaster?

When I was 14. I read about these Grandmasters in books, and I just wanted to be among the best. It didn’t matter the obstacles in my way or not having any trainers when I was a kid or whatever. The game caught me and imprisoned me with its beauty. So it was a long journey to the Grandmaster title. I was elated, of course, and relieved more so because I had been trying for so long. I didn’t get it until I was 33. It only taught me one of the biggest lessons I have ever had in my life, and it is in my current book, *Move by Move*, that I arrived at the Grandmaster title and became an advanced beginner. You thought you were there somehow, and then you realised, oh my god, the ocean is bigger than you thought it was.

Did it matter to you that you were the first Black person to do it?

All the Black people around me were saying, ‘Do it for us’. It is easy to be Black, I am Black. That wasn’t the problem. But to become a Grandmaster is hard. I knew a lot of people would be happy, and they were when I finally accomplished it. But my biggest problem with my accomplishment is that others haven’t followed in my footsteps in great numbers. The way India has followed Anand. And I recognise that it took a while for such a great champion like Anand even to move the needle in India.

So I should give myself some grace in having not seen the rush that I would have expected of young Grandmasters. More has to be done. And I am doing more now, actively, myself. I am giving free lessons to young prodigies that I think have potential.

I have put a fellowship together, the Maurice Ashley Chess Fellowship in the US. Yeah, I started that just this November to find money for young, talented Black kids. In Jamaica, I convinced the government to give a quarter million dollars to developing chess each year.

And I am working with kids in Africa as well. So I am actively participating in what has become the mission of my life. The mission of my life is to reproduce myself. Not just in terms of Black players, but also in terms of Black girls who are, truly, completely invisible in chess.

My biggest problem with my accomplishment is that others haven’t followed in my footsteps in great numbers. The way India has followed Anand. And I recognise that it took a while for such a great champion like Anand even to move the needle in India

How did you become a commentator?

I was discovered by Bob Rice, who was the commissioner of the PCA [Professional Chess Association] that sponsored the World Chess Championship [outside FIDE]. I had coached some young kids to a national championship title, junior high school. I was able to communicate with them, with ease, the difficulty of chess. Bob found out about it and said, ‘I think you could do commentary for us, because we have got this new league, with Kasparov and we’re planning to do tournaments all over the world.’

I remember when I went to Moscow, that first time, and was in the Kremlin building. I was supposed to just do stuff for Eurosport, but the commentary was in Russian, and Bob and all the Americans were like, listen, we need somebody to talk about it in English, because we can’t understand what is going on. So they put me in a booth in the Kremlin, and I stood up there, I thought of basketball, and just called it like I was calling basketball. I was calling it at the top of my voice. Like, what a move by Garry Kasparov!

And it was so entertaining, they said, that Kasparov’s mother, Clara, said she would change the channel from the boring Russian to listen to me, even though she barely spoke any English.

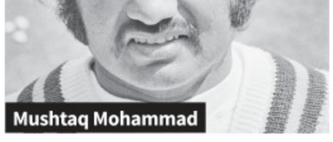
What are your memories of the World title match between Anand and Kasparov in New York in 1995 ?

The first memory is that it took place at the World Trade Centre, the Twin Towers, on September 11. And another memory I have is Garry winning Game 10 after losing the previous one [the first eight games were drawn]. And the way he won was with supreme preparation. He would come into the room. Anand would make a move. He would come in and just play instantly and then walk out of the room. Just play the move, walk out. He did it for the first 20 moves. And poor Anand was just caught in deep preparation. After that, he just crushed him for the rest of the match. And I think Vishy was still young, still had a lot to learn before he became the great champion that he became. But that match was about Garry asserting his dominance.

GAME THEORY

Asian Test spinners in SENA

This week, we take a look at the Asian spinners with the best Test bowling averages in South Africa, England, New Zealand, Australia (SENA), venues that traditionally don’t favour the style of bowling:



Mushtaq Mohammad

Muthiah Muralidaran

Mushtaq Ahmed

Bapu Nadkarni

Erapalli Prasanna

Best bowling averages:
Asian spinners in South Africa, England, New Zealand, Australia

Spinner	Country	Tests	Wkts	Ave	Econ	SR
Mushtaq Mohammad	Pakistan	27	38	**26.26**	2.61	60.2
Muthiah Muralidaran	Sri Lanka	23	125	**26.69**	2.64	60.6
Mushtaq Ahmed	Pakistan	19	84	**28.10**	2.74	61.3
Bapu Nadkarni	India	11	26	**29.46**	1.85	95.5
Erapalli Prasanna	India	20	78	**29.94**	2.42	73.9
Bishan Bedi	India	25	90	**30.98**	2.36	78.6
Iqbal Qasim	Pakistan	9	29	**31.06**	2.58	72.0
Shakib Al Hasan	Bangladesh	8	28	**31.07**	3.20	58.1
B.S. Chandrasekhar	India	19	71	**31.33**	2.67	70.3
Saqlain Mushtaq	Pakistan	11	40	**34.37**	2.73	75.4
Ravi Shastri	India	21	47	**34.63**	2.25	92.3
Dilip Doshi	India	8	29	**36.51**	2.22	98.5
Anil Kumble	India	35	141	**37.04**	2.76	80.2
Danish Kaneria	Pakistan	19	75	**38.50**	3.13	73.6
Ravindra Jadeja	India	22	52	**39.05**	2.71	86.4
Saeed Ajmal	Pakistan	8	27	**39.18**	2.78	84.2
R. Ashwin	India	26	72	**39.55**	2.82	84.1
Harbhajan Singh	India	19	62	**39.93**	3.09	77.3
Vinoo Mankad	India	11	32	**40.87**	2.40	102.1
Rangana Herath	Sri Lanka	21	57	**42.75**	2.93	87.4
Intikhab Alam	Pakistan	22	47	**42.85**	2.84	90.4
Abdul Qadir	Pakistan	16	43	**49.04**	2.79	105.2
Yasir Shah	Pakistan	16	46	**55.08**	3.87	85.3

Note: Minimum 25 wickets; stats do not include 2024 Boxing Day Tests | Source: espncricinfo.com

PICTURE THIS

GETTY IMAGES

Tide’s out!

Veteran footballers play on the wet sand during the 64th Campeonato de Futbol Playero de Santander at the Sardinero beach in Spain earlier this month.

The idea behind the tournament — a long-standing tradition that dates back to 1960-61 — is to bring together the large community of football enthusiasts on the vibrant Santander coast.

The games are played when the tide is low. So the championship calendar is intricately linked to the tide schedule, with matches arranged around the times when the receding water reveals the playing surface.

Every team is represented by a delegate who acts as the ‘owner’ of a specific area of the beach, where the playing field is set up for each matchday. The fields are marked out to measure 100 steps in length and 60 in width, with goals that are 6.20 meters wide and 2 meters high. Each team is responsible for marking and preparing its half of the field before the match.

The championship, which features players aged 28 and older, has attracted retired LaLiga footballers, including the likes of former Barcelona manager Quique Setien.

Man murdered over financial dispute

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A chilling three-month-old murder case has come to light in Doddaballapur's rural area, where a man was allegedly killed by his friends over a financial dispute. The accused initially buried the victim but later exhumed the body and burnt it to destroy evidence.

The victim, identified as Devraj, 62, was reported missing on October 17 by his family after he failed to return from work. Following their complaint, the police launched an investigation, eventually uncovering the crime.

According to Doddabalapura rural police, the accused, identified as Rajakumar and Anil, residents of Doddabalpura abducted and murdered Devraj by strangling him in the accused's car, reportedly over a financial dispute. They later allegedly buried his body in an empty plot of land of one of the accused.

Police cracked the case and arrested one of the suspects.

SIT files chargesheet against BJP legislator Munirathna

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Special Investigation Team (SIT) has recently filed a chargesheet against BJP MLA Munirathna on charges of rape and attempts to infect others with HIV.

The 2,481-page chargesheet includes accounts of 146 witnesses and 850 documents as evidence. Of the 146 witnesses, eight have recorded their statements before a magistrate.

Videos recovered

The Karnataka government had formed the SIT within the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) in September to probe all cases against Munirathna, the R.R. Nagar BJP MLA, who is now on bail.

The chargesheet was submitted to the Special Court of Magistrate for Criminal Cases against Former and Present MPs and MLAs on December 17.

The police have also recovered a few videos which Munirathna allegedly recorded for honeytrapping.

A political activist had lodged a complaint that Munirathna befriended her during the pandemic, raped her, recorded it and blackmailed her using that video. She alleged that he forced her to help him honeytrap his political adversaries using an HIV-positive woman.

During the investigation, it had also come to light that Munirathna and inspector Iyan Reddy had conspired to infect the then Revenue Minister and now Leader of Opposition in the Legislative Assembly, R. Ashok, with HIV-infected blood. However, the conspiracy failed.

Of the eight listed as suspects in the FIR, the SIT has named Munirathna, Mr. Reddy and two of Munirathna's associates – Srinivas P. and Sudhakar R.

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E-TENDER NOTICE
Notice Inviting EXPRESSION OF INTEREST for the
"Selection of ICT Solution Provider"
Expression of Interest (EoI) is invited from reputed, professional and registered firms/companies/agencies, to partner with Kerala Tourism as ICT solution provider, in its various Information & Communication Technology related marketing and promotional activities. The agency should be able to assist Tourism Department of Kerala to maintain the brand equity of the State and ensure that it can overcome competition from national and international destinations.

Category no.	Title of Agency	E-Tender ID no.	Tender Ref no.
1	ICT Solution Provider	2024_TOUR_719723_1	DOT_205_2024_RS1

The firms/agencies should have tourism domain expertise, creative competency, adequate exposure and qualified & experienced manpower to handle the various aspects of tourism marketing and promotion, ranging from research to conceptualization of ICT tools, from creative content development to execution of ICT related projects.
The entire procedure of bidding will be as E-Tender. Interested firms/companies/agencies may log on to **https://etenders.kerala.gov.in** or www.keralatourism.org. Last date and time for the receipt of EoI - **6.00 pm** on **13/01/2025**
28-12-2024 Sd /- Director, Kerala Tourism

THE HINDU GROUP
THE HINDU
REWIND 2024
TRIVIA QUIZ
DAY 28

What is the name of the mascot for the 38th National Games, inspired by Uttarakhand's state bird, symbolizing the region's uniqueness and encouraging young athletes to aim high?
*T&C apply.
Scan QR code or visit **newsth.live/RTQPA** take the quiz. Top 3 winners* every day win gift vouchers.
Answer to yesterday's quiz: Section 6A
Yesterday's Winners:
Siva, Tirupati | **Netranshi,** Mumbai | **Deepa Sudhir,** Bengaluru

APPOINTMENT

KBNU
KHAJA BANDANAWAZ UNIVERSITY
EDUCATING HUMANITY
RECRUITMENT NOTIFICATION
(Notification No. 12/2024, Dated: 26/12/2024
APPOINTMENT OF DEANS
Interview Venue: Hotel Ritz Carlton, Residency Road, Bengaluru.
16th of January 2025 11:00 am - 7:00 pm.
The Khaja Bandanawaz (KBN) University is a private University established by an Act of the Karnataka State Legislative Assembly in 2018 at Kalaburagi. The University is looking to hire committed & result oriented academicians in leadership roles as DEANS of the following Faculties at the main campus.
- Faculty of Medical Sciences
- Faculty of Commerce & Management
- Faculty of Sciences
- Faculty of Law
- Faculty of Engineering & Technology
- Faculty of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences

Candidate must not be over 65 years as on the date of the interview.
The candidate must possess excellent command of the English language and should posses Ph.D. from a recognised university in India.
Candidates should have served as a full-time Professor in a post-graduate college and / or preferably a university for a minimum period of 10 years. With Experience in Academic & Administration.
The candidate should have a demonstrated experience of having discharged academic administrative role in their experience and an appreciable track record of funded research.
Candidates applying for the position of Dean, Faculty of Medical sciences should fulfil the NMC mandated qualifications. Persons who have served as Principal of a medical college will be preferred.
The University offers remunerative pay package & provides housing & travel facilities.
Click https://forms.gle/Ro12hvLXyabeSJxA7 for online form or visit **www.kbn.university** to fill the online form latest by 10th Jan. 2025 by 6:00 pm. Only shortlisted candidates will be intimated on 13th Jan. 2025. The University reserves the right to alter the dates in case of any logistic issue.
Registrar
Scan for Application Form
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Key logistics hub: Freight operations begin at Heelalige Goods Terminal

Located on the outskirts of the city, Heelalige is strategically positioned to serve both Bengaluru and Hosur

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The newly established Heelalige Goods Terminal has officially commenced freight operations, marking a significant milestone for goods transportation along the Bengaluru-Hosur rail route. With the capacity to handle entire rakes of up to 59 wagons, the terminal is set to become a key logistics hub in the region, according to South Western Railway (SWR).

The newly established Heelalige Goods Terminal.
SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

17 BCN wagons

The terminal began its operations on Thursday with the successful unloading of its first consignment of cement. The shipment, comprising 17 BCN wagons, carried 22,235 bags of cement weighing a total of 1,119.4 tonnes. An SWR official said that this is a significant achievement for the facility, which was recently developed to meet the increasing demand for freight services in the area.

Located on the outskirts of Bengaluru, Heelalige is strategically positioned to serve both Bengaluru and Hosur. Its proximity to the Dommasandra-Whitefield main road ensures seamless road connectivity for lorries and other transport vehicles. Officials said the terminal's location and infrastructure would help alleviate traffic congestion in and around the Bengaluru and Hosur regions.

"The Heelalige Goods Terminal is equipped with modern infrastructure to ensure efficient operations. This includes high-mast lighting for the loading area, a concreted loading zone, and a large circulating area for transport vehicles. While the terminal is designed to handle various types of goods, petroleum and iron ore are excluded," official explained. The terminal's development also aims to ease the burden on the Whitefield Satellite Goods Terminal, addressing long-standing logistical bottlenecks in the region.

"The Heelalige terminal is poised to become a major hub for goods transportation,contributing to the region's freight handling capacity," added official.

SWR converts 12 DEMU services into MEMU trains

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

South Western Railway (SWR) has announced the conversion of 12 Diesel Electric Multiple Unit (DEMU) train services into Mainline Electric Multiple Unit (MEMU) trains to enhance operational efficiency. The transition begins on 26 December 2024.

Among the trains being converted, Train No. 06381 from Bengaluru Cantonment to Kolar will be the first to switch, effective immediately. Other services, such as Train Nos. 06583/06584 between KSR Bengaluru and Hassan, and Train Nos. 16549/16550 connecting KSR Bengaluru and Kolar, will follow suit on 27 December. The remaining services, including Train Nos. 06386, 06388, and 06392, will complete the transition by 28 December.

The move is expected to improve energy efficiency and provide better commuter services on key routes, including Bengaluru, Kolar, and Hassan, officials said.

Move to bar repeat nomination to university Syndicates

Jayanth R.
BENGALURU

The govt. will introduce a Bill to amend the Karnataka State Universities Act, 2000

The State government has decided to amend the Karnataka State Universities Act, 2000, to prohibit the Governor (Chancellor of all State universities) from nominating individuals for a second term on the Syndicate of any State university, regardless of whether it's the same university or another.

This decision stems from a recent disagreement between the Governor and the State government over the interpretation of the existing Act. The Governor has been nominating individuals who have served on the Syndicate of one university to the Syndicate of another.

Amendment Bill

B.R. Supreeth, whose term on the Syndicate of Bengaluru North University (BNU) was to end in August 2025, was nominated by the Governor to the Syndicate of Bengaluru City University in November 2024. Similarly, Rangappa and Devaraj, syndicate members of BNU, resigned from their positions in 2022 to join BCU and Tumkur University respectively as syndicate members.

The sub section-2 of Section-39 (Restriction of holding the membership of the authorities) of Karnataka State Universities Act, 2000 says: "Any person nominated to any of the authorities under this Act shall not be eligible for being nominated or elected for a second term".

While the State government interprets this as a bar on anyone serving for two terms as Syndicate members of any State university, the Governor has interpreted this as a bar on a syndicate member being renominated for a second term in the same university.

To address this ambiguity and prevent further misinterpretations, the State government will introduce an amendment Bill in the upcoming legislative session.

This amendment will explicitly clarify that no individual who has served as a Syndicate member of any State university is eligible for nomination to the Syndicate of any other State university.

Higher Education Minister M.C. Sudhakar said the Act clearly states that no person should be nominated as a member of the Syndicate for a second term. "However, some people are misusing the Governor's office and getting reappointed for a second term, interpreting the law in a different way. To prevent this, we have now decided to amend The Karnataka State Universities Act, 2000 to clearly stipulate that if a person has already served as a Syndicate member of any State university, that person cannot be nominated again for a second term either to the same university or to any other university in the state," he said.

Teacher ends life over property transaction

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A government high school teacher, allegedly upset over a property transaction gone wrong, ended his life on Friday.

The deceased has been identified as Narasimha Murthy, 50, working as a teacher at Government High School in Jadigenahalli, Hoskote taluk and was residing at Hosahalli in the city. The teacher owned 25 guntas of agricultural land in Tunganagar and wanted to sell it. A local Congress leader Satish had reportedly entered into a sale agreement with him for ₹10 Crore, but had paid only an advance of ₹10 Lakh. Investigations suggest that the buyer had not paid the rest of the money, and allegedly threatened the teacher. Upset over this, the teacher is alleged to have ended his life, sources said.

(Those who are disturbed or having suicidal tendencies can seek help from Arogya Sahayavani Ph. 104)

Three arrested in honeytrap case

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Byadarahalli police arrested three persons on Friday for their alleged involvement in a honeytrap case. However, the search is on for a woman who trapped a civil contractor.

According to the police, about five months back the civil contractor came into contact with the accused identified as Nayana through a common friend identified as Shiva. The police said after a while the woman started to ask for money on the pretext that her son is unwell and she is in need of money for treatment.

The contractor who was allegedly deceived by her ploy paid her ₹14,000 in multiple instalments.

The police further said on December 9, when contractor was travelling for work the woman followed him r and insisted that he visit her house to have tea.

When the contractor was in the house three people came to the place and threatened to arrest him saying he was engaging in a sex racket.

The visitors who are also accused in the case claimed that they were from the police. The accused robbed a gold ring, chain, ₹29,000 cash forced the contractor to pay ₹26,000 through a payment app and fled .

GoPals walkathon tomorrow

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

GoPals, a group of working professionals creating awareness for the conservation of native Indian agricultural practices, and environment and leading a sustainable lifestyle based on native Indian practices, is organising a walkathon on the theme Walk-2-HEAL (Health, Environment, Agriculture and Lifestyle) on Sunday, at Cubbon Park. The walkathon will be flagged off at 7.30 a.m. The donations will go to the marginalised organic farmers under Go-Chetana initiative. For details, visit https://www.wegopals.com/

Bengaluru girl wins three medals for skating

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

This is the first time the State has won three medals in this age group in the Artistic Discipline

Bengaluru girl Nythika A. L., 6, won three medals at the 62nd National Roller Skating Championship - Artistic Discipline, held in Pollachi, Tamil Nadu, between December 5 and 10, 2024.

Competing in the 5-7 age group, Nythika represented Karnataka and brought home three medals: two gold medals for the Figure Skating and Solo Dance categories and a silver medal in the Quad Freestyle category. This is the first time the State has won three medals in this age group in the Artistic Discipline, her mother Lekshmi C., said.

Speaking about her daughter's journey, Ms. Lekshmi said that two years ago, Nythika explored various sports, but found her passion in skating. "There was no turning back after she put on roller skates for the first time. Today, as she stands as a state champion, we are hopeful that she will one day represent India," she said. A Class 1 student, she participated in the event representing Karnataka from the Flying Skaters Club.

Timings
BENGALURU

SATURDAY, DEC. 28		
RISE	06:40	SET 18:02
RISE	04:10	SET 15:43
SUNDAY, DEC. 29		
RISE	06:40	SET 18:03
RISE	05:06	SET 16:34
MONDAY, DEC. 30		
RISE	06:41	SET 18:04
RISE	06:03	SET 17:31

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	29	23
Mysuru	28	19
Bengaluru	24	19

Bengaluru Today
26°C TMostly dry weather to prevail.Morning will be cool with mist and haze. Day will be comfortable. Night will be slight cool.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
27°C Morning will be cool with mist and haze. The day will be comfortabe. Night will be cool. Dry weather to continue.

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THE HINDU
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SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
E- TENDER NOTICE No. 29/MYS/2024 of 20-12-2024
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tenders for the following works:

Sl.	Item of work	Approx Value
1	Hassan-Mangaluru Jn. Section :- Estimate of complete Bridge Channel Sleeper Renewal with H Beam sleeper for Bridges in Sakleshpur-Subrahmanya Road ghat section.	Rs. 29,17,44,347/-
2	**Sub Work - I**:- Construction of 06 Nos. of Type-II and 04 Nos. of Type-III Staff quarters at Sakleshpur. **Sub Work - II**: Mysuru Station:- Repairs of FOB Steps in PF No.1&2 (BALANCE WORK) **Sub Work - III**:- Subrahmanya Road- Construction of Over head tank Intze type 1.0 lakh litre capacity **Sub Work - IV**:- Subrahmanya Road- Construction of one Lakhs litres of GLR **Sub Work - V**:- Subrahmanya Road- Construction of septic tank and sanitary line at Subrahmanya Road Colony **Sub Work -VI**:-Assistant Divisional Engineer Sakleshpur Sub Division: Improvements to Water supply system to Yedakumari , Hare betta and Shiribagilu staff quarters.	Rs. 4,70,70,085/-
3	**Sub Work - I**:- Assistant Divisional Engineer Davangere Section- Proposal for improvements to staff Quarters by improving Kitchen, toilet, bathroom, courtyard, replacement of doors and windows, arresting of roof leakage (TY-I=42 units, TY-II=9 units, Total=51 Units) **Sub Work - II**:- Assistant Divisional Engineer Chitradurg Section- Improvements to staff Quarters by improving Kitchen, toilet, bathroom, courtyard, replacement of doors and windows, arresting of roof leakage (TY-I=37 units, TY-II=26 units, TY III-5 units (Total 68) units **Sub Work - III** :Assistant Divisional Engineer / Davangere Section: Improvement to SSE/Pway store at Harpanhallli.	Rs. 4,50,05,655/-
4	Painting of steel structures due for painting during the year 2024-25 under SSE/Br/Mysuru Section.	Rs. 41,46,357/-

Last date for submission of bids:**Upto 11:00 Hrs. on 13-01-2025**
For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in
PUB/662/AAF/PRB/SWR/2024-25 **Senior Divisional Engineer /Co-Ordination/Mysuru**
South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRRLY

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PERSONAL
CHANGE OF NAME

I, NO: 10490249W Rank HAV Name Venkanagouda Hosamani, R/a Ghattiganur (Vill) Ramawadagi (Post) Hungund (Teh) Bagalkot (Dist) Karnataka-587718 have changed my minor Son name from Prajwal to Prajwal V H vide affidavit dt: 17.12.2024 sworn before Notary G.M.Vastrad, Hungund.

I, SHATTAVVA, Mother of No: 10490185W Rank Hav Name Sanganabasappa, R/a Hagedala (Vill) Ramawadagi (Post) Hungund (Teh) Bagalkot (Dist), Karnataka-587718 have changed my name from Shattavva to Shantavva Konkanakoppa vide affidavit dt: 17.12.2024 sworn before Notary G.M.Vastra, Hungund.

I, Sri Nirmala CH Barik, S/o. Krushna CH Barik, Resident of Qtr No. SMQ-P4/3, Akash Vihar, Air Force Camp, Marathahalli, Bengaluru - 560037, have changed my name from Sri Nirmala CH Barik to Nirmal Chandra Barik vide Affidavit dated 26-12-2024 Before Notary A.R. Muneer Ahmed at Bengaluru

PERSONAL
CHANGE OF NAME

I, MANJULA, Spouse of No: 10490249W Rank Hav Name Venkanagouda Hosamani R/a Ghattiganur (Vill) Ramawadagi (Post) Hungund (Teh) Bagalkot (Dist) Karnataka-587718 have changed my name from Manjula to Manjula Hosamani vide affidavit dt: 17.12.2024 sworn before Notary G.M.Vastrad, Hungund.

I, AJIT Kumar Mishrimal, R/a No.659, 11th Main Road, 46th Cross, 3rd Block, Rajajinagar, Bangalore-560010 have changed my name to Ajit Kumar vide affidavit dt: 27.12.2024 sworn before Notary K.V.Mani, B'luru.

I, DIVYA Satheeshchandran, D/o Satheesh Chandran K, R/a #GNR Platinum Fort, Flat B108, Horamavu Agara Main Road, Chikka Nanjunda Reddy Layout, Coconut Grove Layout, Bengaluru-560043 have changed my name to Divya S Menon vide affidavit dt: 27.12.2024 sworn before Notary K.P.Ramesh, B'luru

K SRINIVASULU Resident of H NO.32, Dwarakanagar, Yelahanka, Bengaluru–560063 have changed my son's from K DHEEKSHITH to KURUBA DHARANN VARDAN vide Affidavit dated 17/09/2024 Sworn before Notary S R Ravikumar, Bengaluru.

EXHIBITION / EVENTS FAIR
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20th - 29th December-2024
The Institution of Engineers #3, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Veedhi, Opp. Indian Express, Bengaluru
FREE PARKING
9916542367
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SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
E-Tender Notice No. B/TRD.2024-25/23
Dated: 20-12-2024
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tenders for the following works:-

Name of work	Approx. Value
[i] Construction of Track Machine siding at Mulanur, Somanayakkanpatti, Malur, Kolar, Srinivasapura and Chikballapur station for a length of 420m- OHE modification [ii] OHE Modifications in connection with Engineering track works in Bengaluru - Jolarpettai and Yelahanka-Bangarapet Section. [iii] Pending works after electrification of Bangarapet-Yelahanka (Gr294) Sections of Bengaluru Division.	Rs. 1,13,51,335.07

Last date for submission of bids:
Upto 15:00 Hrs. on 10-01-2025
For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in
Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer Traction Distribution, Bengaluru
PUB/660/AAF/PRB/SWR/2024-25
South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRRLY

WEST CENTRAL RAILWAY
E-Tender Notice
E-Tender on behalf of the President of India acting through Deputy Chief Engineer (Construction)-I, West Central Railway, Bhopal for the following work (Two Packet system):- **Tender No.:** DYCE-C-I-BPL-10-2024, **Brief Description:** Construction of 06 Nos Road over Bridges in lieu of Level Crossings under jurisdiction of Dy. CE/C-I/BPL in Bina-Itarsi-Khandwa section of Bhopal division in West Central Railway, **Approx. tender value (Rs.):** 19467.45 Lakh, **Earnest Money (Rs.):** 9883700.00, **Due date of Closing of tender:** 15/01/2025 at 15.00 hrs., Completion period: 18 (Eighteen) months including harvest & monsoon period. The complete information of above E-Tender is available on "http://www.ireps.gov.in" and also placed on the Notice Board of office of the Dy.CE(C)-I/West Central Railway/Bhopal. Tenders other than in the form of e-bids shall not be accepted against above tender. Corrigendum, if any issued in connection with tender, will be available on above mentioned website only.
Dy. Chief Engineer (Constn.)-I West Central Railway, Bhopal
स्वच्छ भारत अभियान एक कदम स्वच्छता की ओर

कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय ग्रामीण विकास विशेष प्रमण्डल, जामताड़ा
Email Id:rdsdjmt@gmail.com
अल्पकालीन ई0–आमंत्रण
संख्या–RDD/SD/JMT/13/2024-25
1. कार्य की विस्तृत विवरणी :–

क्र0	कार्य का नाम	प्राक्कलित राशि	अग्रधन की राशि	परिमाण विपत्र का मुल्य	कार्य समाप्ति की अवधि
1	2	3	4	5	6
1	जामताड़ा जिलान्तर्गत जामताड़ा प्रखण्ड के रानीडीह पंचायत में स्टेडियम निर्माण कार्य।	2,22,51,000.00	4,46,000.00	10,000.00	12 माह

2. वेबसाईट में निविदा प्रकाशन की तिथि :–दिनांक–06.01.2025
3. ई0–निविदा प्राप्ति की तिथि एवं समय :–दिनांक–06.01.2025 से दिनांक–15.01.2025 (अपराह्न 5:00 बजे)
4. निविदा शुल्क एवं अग्रधन की राशि केवल Online Mode द्वारा की स्वीकार्य होगी।
5. निविदा शुल्क एवं अग्रधन की राशि का ई–भुगतान जिस खाता से किया जायेगा, उसी खाते में अग्रधन की राशि वापस होगी। अगर खाता को बंद कर दिया जाता है तो सारी जबावदेही संबंधित निविदादाता की होगी।
6. निविदा खोलने का स्थानः–e-Procurement Cell, कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय ग्रामीण विकास विशेष प्रमण्डल, जामताड़ा।
7. निविदा खुलने की तिथि एवं समयः–दिनांक–17.01.2025 (अपराह्न 2:00 बजे)
8. निविदा आमंत्रित करने वाले पदाधिकारी का नाम एवं पताः–कार्यपालक अभियंता,ग्रामीण विकास विशेष प्रमण्डल, जामताड़ा।
9. ई0–निविदा प्रकोष्ठ का दुरभाष संख्याः–9973957543
10. अधोहस्ताक्षरी / सक्षम पदाधिकारी को किसी भी निविदा को बिना कारण बताये रद्द करने का अधिकार सुरक्षित रहेंगा तथा निविदादाता को कारण पृच्छा का अधिकार मान्य नहीं होगा।
11. B.O.Q की राशि घट–बढ़ सकती है, तदनुसार अग्रधन की राशि देय होगी।

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ह0/–
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PR.NO.342976 Rural Development(24-25):D

TOWN MUNICIPAL COUNCIL, CHANNARAYAPATNA, HASSAN DISTRICT
PH.NO: 08176-255411, 254543 email add: itstaff_ulb_channarayapatna@yahoo.co.in website add : http://www.channarayapatnatown.mrc.gov.in/
No. TMC/CRP/EE Tender/CR/08 /2024-25 Date : 26-12-2024
: E-Procurement Tender :
The Chief Officer, TMC, Channarayapatna invites tenders from eligible tenderers, for the development of works detailed in the below. The tenderers may submit the tenders as below. Name of the Work: Construction of Proposed 6TPD MRF Centre Material Recovery Facility of PEB Structure (PRIMARY and SECONDARY SHED) Indent No:-DMA/2023-24/BD/WORK_INDENT 15621/CALL-3 1]Last date and time for receipt of tenders through E-portal : From 26-12-2024 to 10-01-2025, Time:17.30 2] Time and date of opening of Technical bid : date: 13-01-2025 time 11.00 AM
sd/- (K N Hemantha) Chief Officer , TMC Channarayapatna
ವಾಸಾಸಂ೧/ಹಿಸನಿ/ಹಾಸನ/782/ಕೆಎಸ್ಎಂಸಿಎ/2024–25

BENGALURU SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT LIMITED
Office of the Deputy General Manager-1, BSWML, 1st Floor, UNI Building, Thimmaiah Road, Vasanth Nagar, Bengaluru – 560 052
No:DGM-1/BSWML/TEND/ 10 /2024-25 Date: 26.12.2024
Short Term Tender Notification
(Through GoK KPP Portal Only)
The Deputy General Manager-1, Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Limited on behalf of the Managing Director, BSWML, Bengaluru invites bids from eligible bidders for the Services. The details of the short term tender is as below

Sl. No.	Name of the Services	Appx. Amount put to bid per Annum (Rs. In Lakhs) (Excluding GST)
1.	Providing Services of marshals & Marshal supervisors to monitor SWM activities and enforcement of SWM in BBMP limits for a period of 36 months	3062.00

Tender Pre Bid meeting	04.01.2025 at 15:00 hrs at above mentioned office
Last Date of Receipt of Tender	13.01.2025 Before 16:00 hrs
Opening of Technical Bid	15.01.2025 After 16:30 hrs

More details can be downloaded from website - **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**
Sd/-
Deputy General Manager-1
BSWML
DIPR/CP/3992/AKAR/2024-25

Published by Nirmala Lakshman at No 19&21, Bhagwan Mahaveer Road, Bengaluru-560001 and Printed by C. Sridhar at Plot No. 13-D, Bommasandra-Jigani Link Road, KIADB Industrial Area, Bommasandra, Anekal Taluk, Bengaluru-560099 on behalf of THG PUBLISHING PVT LTD., Chennai-600002. Editor: Suresh Nambath (Responsible for selection of news under the PRP Act).
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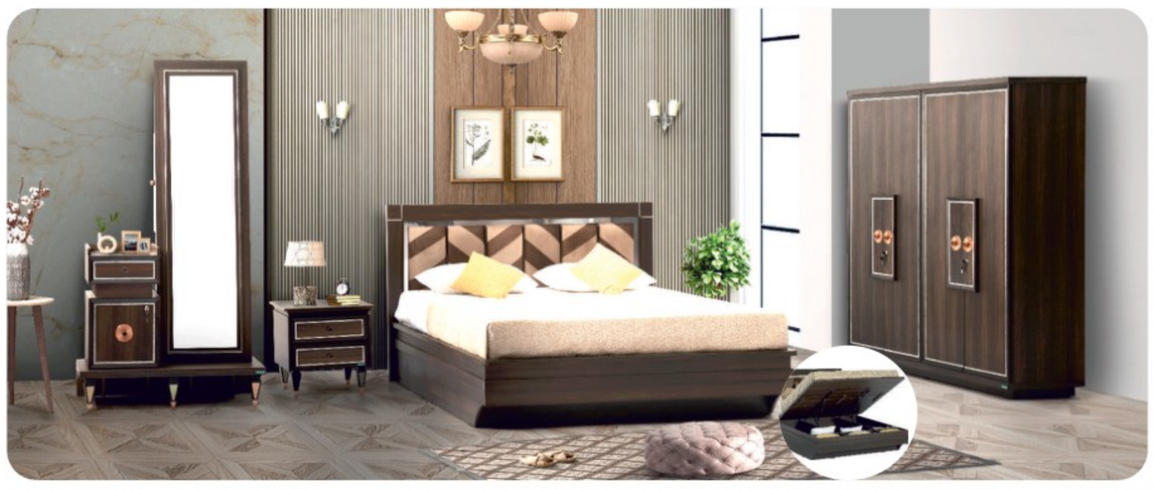

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MONTY RECLINER SOFA (3RE + 1RE + 1RE)
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NORLAND RECLINER SOFA (3RR + 2RR)
Was ₹1,45,000 Now ₹1,20,000

RECLINER SOFA SET (3 + 1R + 1R)
JUST ₹ 63,000 ONWARDS

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On Purchase of Feltro Corner Sofa (2RE)

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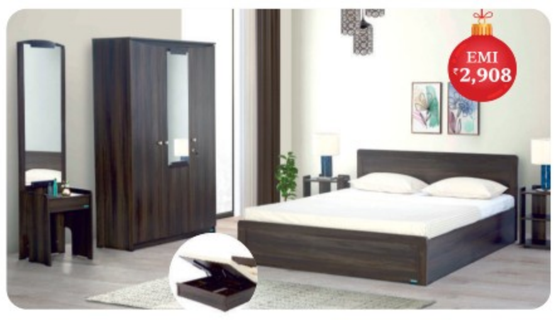
MANACO CORNER SOFA
Was ₹56,000 Now ₹39,900

RICKY 3 PIECE BEDROOM SET (QUEEN BED + WARDROBE + DRESSER)
Was ₹67,900 Now ₹49,900

JACOB 6 SEATER DINING TABLE SET
Was ₹90,000 Now ₹79,000

UPTO 40% OFF
ON MODULAR KITCHEN

STAFFORD SOFA (3 + 2 SEATER)
JUST ₹ 39,900 ONLY



MERCURY 3 PIECE BEDROOM SET
JUST ₹ 34,900 ONLY

HELENA 6 SEATER DINING TABLE SET
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CABAL EXECUTIVE TABLE
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250+ SHOWROOMS IN SOUTH ASIA

JP NAGAR 88677 64517	MARATHAHALLI 9611022523	ELECTRONIC CITY 080 43705882	NAGARBHAVI 9686445158	BANASWADI 080 4152 3335	RAJAJINAGAR 080 23132297	HEBBAL 7348835653	MANTRI SQUARE MALL 9611700309
BELAGAVI 0831 2478223	MANGALORE 0824 4251 388	UDUPI 0820 2528788	KUNDAPURA 08254 263888	HASSAN 08172 246595	MYSORE 0821 4268646	BALLARI 08392 268944	HUBLI 0836 2363435	KALABURAGI 08472 235852

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A BG-BGE

TV actor held for alleged harassment

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Bengaluru police have arrested a small-screen actor on charges of sexual harassment, assault, and issuing death threats.

The accused, identified as 32-year-old Charith Balappa alias Dhruvant Talwar, a resident of Marathahalli's NGEF Layout, was arrested by R.R. Nagar police based on a complaint filed by a 29-year-old television actress.

'Misused trust'

The actress alleged in her complaint that she has been working in Kannada and Telugu serials for the past seven years. She became acquainted with Charith in November 2023, who she alleged misused her trust to pressure her into a relationship. She accused him of demanding physical intimacy and threatening to kill her if she refused.

The victim also alleged that Charith, who is divorced, attempted to blackmail her using private videos and photos, threatening to share them on social media and WhatsApp groups of actors. He reportedly harassed her further by visiting her residence with accomplices and demanded money.

Claiming to have powerful connections, Charith allegedly threatened to frame her in false cases. The actress also accused him of assault and claimed he had harassed other women actors as well. Following her complaint, police arrested the accused and launched an investigation.

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

E-Auction Notification

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites registered eligible Bidders to participate in E-Auction for "Contract of installation, refurblshing, maintenance and operation of Air-Conditioned Multi-Cuisine Rail Coach Restaurant inside Train Coach to be set up in Railway land of Swami Vivekananda Park area, Mysuru for a period of 05 Years" scheduled on **08-01-2025 at 11:30 Hrs.**

For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in

Senior Divisional Commercial Manager
PUB/656/AAF/PRB/SWR/2024-25 **Mysuru**
South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRRLY

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the General Public and to whomsoever it may concern that my client is intending to purchase residential site described in the schedule hereunder from Sri. S.K. Anjan Kumar, the present owner, who have represented that he has a clear and marketable title to the same. Any person/s, financial institutions and statutory authorities who claims any right, title or interest of any nature or any lien, charge or enforceable right in relation to the schedule property and/or has any objections of any nature to the aforesaid transaction should lodge such claim and/or objections in writing to the undersigned together with supporting documents within fifteen *(15)* days hereof, failing which it will be presumed that no valid claims or objections subsist and my client would proceed to complete the transaction with the present owner thereof subject to compliance with other statutory and legal formalities.

Schedule Property: All that piece and parcel of the residential site bearing Site No. 02, E- Khatha PID No.9687419753 measuring East to West: 30 Feet and North to South: 50 Feet, totally measuring 1,500 Sq. ft. which is formed in converted land bearing Survey No.30 measuring to an extent of 5 Acers 14 Guntas from Agricultural to Non-Agricultural purpose vide Official Memorandum bearing No. BDS/ALN/SR(N)66/1995-96 dated 27/11/1995, issued by the Deputy Commissioner Bangalore District, situated at Dasarahalli Village, Yeshwanthpura Hobli, Bengaluru North Taluk, Bengaluru District, and now coming under BBMP Ward No.39 and together with all rights, appurtenances whatsoever underneath or above the surface and with all civil amenities and being bounded on the:

East by : Site No.01,
West by : Site No. 03,
North by : St. Mary's School,
South by : Road

Adv.Abymoan J,
No.48, 1 st Cross, Dinur Main Road, RT Nagar Post,
Bengaluru – 560 032
Date : 28/12/2024

GOVT. OF ODISHA email: se_nerwkjr@rediffmail.com

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER, RURAL WORKS CIRCLE : KEONJHAR

e Procurement Notice for Bridge Work under SBY
Identification No. NCB-23 / RWCKJR/20204-25

No. 3852 // Date : 23.12.24

1. Name of the Work : **Construction of bridge work under SBY in the District of Keonjhar.**
2. No. of Work : **01 (One)** No.
3. Estimated Cost : As per Annexure in NIT.
4. Class of Contractor (Eligible) : As per Annexure in NIT
5. Period of Completion : As per Annexure in NIT
6. Other details:

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender Online for bidding From	To	Last Date & Time of Seeking Tender Clarification	Date & Time of Opening of Tender in O/O C.C.E., R.W.Circle,Keonjhar Technical Bid	Financial Bid
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Chief Construction Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Keonjhar	NCB-23 / RWCKJR / 2024-25	Dt.31.12.24 at 11:00 A.M.	Dt.15.01.25 up to 5:00 P.M.	Dt.13.01.25 up to 5:00 P.M.	Dt.16.01.25 at 11:00 A.M.	Will be intimated later

● Further details can be seen from the website: **www.tendersorissa.gov.in**

Chief Construction Engineer, R.W.Circle, Keonjhar.

O-1010: OIPR-25177/11/0031/2425

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OFFICE OF THE CHIEF GENERAL MANAGER (P&C), IDCO, IDCO TOWERS, BHUBANESWAR - 751022

Tender Call Notice No. H.O./P&C/EST-E-2539/01/2023/ 36107 Dated :- 24.12.2024

NOTICE INVITING TENDER UNDER NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-Procurement

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Value of Work (Approx.)	Period of Completion
1.	Detailed Design, Drawing, Construction, Installation of Required machinery & equipment, Testing & Commissioning of STP of different Capacities including 5 years of O&M at Workers Hostels of IDCO at Different Locations in Odisha on Turnkey Basis package-2	₹ 3.39 Crores	06 (Six) Calendar Months

I. Other details

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender On-Line for Bidding From	To
1	2	3	4
Chief General Manager (P&C), IDCO, IDCO Towers, Bhubaneswar-751022.	Bid ID.No. P&C/EST/E-35/2024-25	17.00 Hours of dt. 31.12.2024	17.00 Hours of dt. 16.01.2025

Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement Portal **www.tendersodisha.gov.in** . Corrigendum or addendum if any will not be published in news papers and can only be seen in the e-procurement portal **www.tenderodisha.gov.in** as well as IDCO website **www.idco.in.**

CAD-2005: **Sd/- Chief General Manager (P&C), IDCO, Bhubaneswar**

OIPR-14003/11/0089/2425

Recruitment Notification for World Skill Center, Bhubaneswar

(WSC is an Advanced Skill Training Institute and a Section 8 Company under the Skill Development and Technical Education Dept., Govt. of Odisha)

World Skill Center invites application through online mode for the following position vide Advertisement No. WSC/159/ADMIN/2024-25/2991 Dt. 27.12.2024

Sl.No.	Name of Position	No. Of Positions	Online Application Deadline
1	Chief Executive Officer	01	27.01.2025 ; 23.59 hours

Suitable eligible professionals may view relevant details, such as eligibility criteria, qualification, experience, application procedure, etc. in the careers section of WSC website by using the link

https://www.worldskillcenter.org/en/sun/careers

World Skill Center, Tower 2010, Block B, Sector A,
Mancheswar Industrial Estate, BBSR-751007
Website : https://worldskillcenter.org/

Sd/-
COO, WSC

kk-293 OIPR-44009/11/0017/2425

बैंक ऑफ़ बड़ौदा Bank of Baroda

Maninagar (West) Branch
Maninagar Cross Road, Maninagar, Ahmedabad-380008
Tele :9152940068,079-25462740,079-25451924,
Email: dbmanw@bankofbaroda.com

SALE NOTICE (30 DAYS) FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES "APPENDIX-IV-A [See proviso to Rule 6 (2) & 8 (6)]

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 6 (2) & 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s), Mortgagor(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, possession of which has been taken by the Authorized Officer of **Bank of Baroda,** The Secured Creditor, will be sold on **"As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is"** for recovery of below mentioned account. The details of Borrower(s), Mortgagor(s) and Guarantor(s) Secured Asset/s/Dues/Reserve Price/e-Auction date & Time, EMD and Bid Increase Amount are mentioned below :

Sl. No.	Name & address of Borrower/s / Guarantor/ Mortgagor s	Give short description of the immovable property with known encumbrances, if any	Reserve Price, EMD Bid Increase Amount	Dues. As per Demand notice (Less Recovery made after issuance of 13(2) demand notice) Plus interest there on
1	**M/s Unique Intertrade Private Limited Directors: 1.Reena Pankaj Surana 2.Bimalpat Surana** Registered Address-survey No.77, Church Road, K Channasandra, Bengaluru Rural, Karnataka-560043 **Guarantors : 1.Reena Pankaj Surana 2. Pankaj J Bothra 3. Pankaj Surana 4. Anil C Bothra 5. Urmila Bothra 6. Meera Jain**	**(1)** All piece and parcel of the constructed property **Flat No. D/3,** 4th Floor, Vijay Tower, near Kankaria Lake, besides Hill Park Society, Kankaria Road, Maninagar, Ahmedabad, Area of Flat-142.14 sq mtrs and Carpet Area 87.53 sq meter, approx stands record in the name of **Mrs. Meera Jumarmal Bothra** Boundries: East-building margin and Road, West –Flat No. D 4, North-Building Margin, South: Passage and Flat No D/02, **CERSAI ID 400004470927**	Reserve Price Rs.71,07,300/- EMD: Rs. 7,10,730/- Bid Inc.: Rs.25,000/-	Rs.2,96,86,499.96 as on 31.08.2024 Plus Interest from 01.09.2024 Plus Other Charges & Cost plus Rs.71,39,837.21 as on 31.08.2024 Plus Interest from 01.09.2024 Plus Other Charges & Cost Total Rs 36826337.17
		(2) Flat No. D/4, 4th Floor, Vijay Tower, near Kankaria Lake, besides Hill Park Society, Kankaria Road, Maninagar, Ahmedabad. Area of flat-142.14 sq mtrs and Carpet Area 87.53 sq meter, approx stands record in the name of **Mrs Urmila Chandmal Bothra** Boundries: East- flat No. D/3, West – building Margin, North-building Margin, South: Passage and Flat No D/01. **CERSAI ID: 400004473185**	Reserve Price Rs.76,54,500/- EMD: Rs. 7,65,450/- Bid Inc.: Rs.25,000/-	
		(3) Flat No.2, Ground Floor, GM Elegency Apartment Bearing Site No. 34,35 and 36, CMC Katha No. 5562,5563,5564, situated at Halagevaderahally Village, 3rd Main Road, off Kenchenahalli Road, near State Bank of India, BEML Layout, RR Nagar Branch, Kengeri Hobli, Bangalore-560098. Boudries: East-Deccan Arcade Apartment/private Property, West : Public Road, North : Public Road, South : Private Property No 37. **CERSAI ID : 400011407347**	Reserve Price Rs.1,21,50,000/- EMD: Rs.12,15,000/- Bid Inc.: Rs.25,000/-	

E-Auction Date : 03.02.2025 and E-Auction Time: 02:00 PM to 06:00 PM (unlimited extension of 10 minutes)
Property inspection Date: 28/01/2025, Time : 11.00 Am to 2.00 PM
(BY TAKING PRIOR APPOINTMENT) Status of Possession: Symbolic

a. **Property is in Symbolic Possession and Bidder is purchasing the property in symbolic possession at his / own risk & responsibility.**
b. **Bank will hand over the possession of property symbolically only and Successful Auction bidder/purchaser will not claim physical possession from the Bank.**
c. **Bank will not be responsible or duty bound for handing over of physical possession.**
d. **Successful Auction Purchaser will not be entitled to claim any interest, in any case of return of money.**
e. **Successful Auction Purchaser has to submit the Declaration Cum Undertaking confirming the above terms & condition immediately after e-Auction.**
f. **Subsequent to sale if successful bidder fails to submit Declaration Cum Undertaking the bid EMD amount will be forfeited**
g. **The intending purchser has to produce an Undertaking duly Stampled and Notarised as per Bank Format (in case of Sale on the basis of Symbolic Possession)**

For detailed terms and conditions of sale, please refer to the link provided in **https://www.bankofbaroda.in/e-auction.htm** and **https://ibapi.in.** Also, prospective bidders may contact the Branch head **Sanjay Kumar : 9828549857 (GST/TDS as per Government Rules applicable shall be payable by purchaser on sale of Movable/ Immovable Assets.**

AS PER SARFAESI Act, STATUTORY -30- DAYS SALE NOTICE TO THE BORROWER /GUARANTOR/ MORTGAGOR

The above mentioned borrower /s is/ are hereby noticed to pay the sum as mentioned in section 13(2) Notice in full before the date of auction, failing which property will be auctioned / sold and balance dues if any will be recovered with Interest and cost from borrowers/ guarantors /mortgagor.

Date: 27.12.2024, Place:- Ahmedabad **Sd/-Authorised Officer, Bank of Baroda**

Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar Municipal Corporation
Executive Engineer-Building Department
Phone : (0240) 2333536-40, 2348001-05, Fax : (0240) 2331213

Ow/CSMC/EE-Building/2024/112 **Corrigendum-2** Date : 27/12/2024

Extension of Last Date for Submission of Bids

Subject: Development of Museum using Modern Technologies at Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Research Centre, Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar
Reference : 1) Tender ID 2024_AMCA_1121228_1
2) Corrigendum-1: Ow/CSMC/EE-Building/2024/103 dated 17/12/2024

In reference to the Tender mentioned above for the work of Development of Museum using Modern Technologies at Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Research Centre, Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar where in the last date of submission of Proposals was "30th December 2024 by 5:00 PM" is rescheduled as per the discussion in pre bid meeting. Revised dates are as follows:-

1. Last Date and Time for receipt of Bids: 13th January, 2025 by 5:00 pm
2. Time and Date of Opening Technical Bids: 15th January 2025 by 11:00 am.

The Common set of Deviations to the Tender issued dated 5th December, 2024 would be provided soon. Please take note.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer (Building)
CSMC, Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar

SOUTHERN RAILWAY

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM DIVISION

TENDER NOTICE No. SR-TVC0SnT(TEND)/3/2024/12
Dated: 24.12.2024

For and on behalf of The President of India, The Senior Divisional Signal & Telecommunication Engineer, Southern Railway, Thiruvananthapuram - 14 invites e-tenders for the following works.

Sl. No.	Tender No	Name of the works
1	TVC-SNT-TELE-24-25-21	Provision of electronic based Train signal register (eTSR) under the jurisdiction of DSTE / ERS in TVC Division
2	TVC-SNT-SIG-24-25-23	Provision of Signalling arrangements at TVC station in connection with proposed extension of PF No.2

Sl. No.	Cash Value (Approx.) (₹ Ps)	Earnest Money Deposit (₹)	Last Date for Receipt of Tender	Completion Period
1	13,74,304.00	27,500.00	15.01.2025 up to 14.00 Hrs	6 months
2	39,44,840.93	78,900.00	15.01.2025 up to 14.00 Hrs	4 months

Complete details & tender document will be available at **www.ireps.gov.in**

Divisional Signal & Telecommunication Engineer, Thiruvananthapuram - 14

SMART CITY THIRUVANANTHAPURAM LIMITED
CIN U75302KL2017SGC05027

E-TENDER NOTICE

E-Tenders are invited for the following projects of Smart City Thiruvananthapuram Limited

Sl. No.	Name of Project	E-Tender ID	PAC Amount (Exclusive Of GST)	Bid Submission Last Date
1	Development of Chalai Warehouse and Commercial Complex in Thiruvananthapuram Balance Work	2024_SCTLT_716160_1	Rs.7,38,42,276/-	30-DEC-2024 03.00PM

All the RFP documents and details are available on the e-Tender Website. Bids are only accepted online on the Website https://etenders.kerala.gov.in

(sd/-) **CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, SMART CITY THIRUVANANTHAPURAM Ltd.**

Office of the Executive Engineer
RDW&S Department, Court Road, Chamarajanagara Division, Chamarajanagara.
Office And EE : 08226-226054 E-mail : eerdwsd.chn2014@gmail.com

E-Procurement Tender Notification No.10/2024-25, Dated : 23.12.2024

On Behalf of Governor of Karnataka, The Executive Engineer, Rural Drinking Water & Sanitation Dept, Chamarajanagara Division, Chamarajanagar Invites from eligible General Category Contractors for **2024-25 SBM Scheme Construction of 3 KLD FSTP For Bandalli Village in Hanur Taluk, Chamarajanagar District Estimated Cost :- 89.16 Lakhs and Supply of Equipments to PWM Units under SBM Scheme (Call-3) Estimated Cost:-29.00 Lakhs.** The eligible Class-III Above for General Category Civil Contractors in Chamarajanagara Dist are required to submit through E-Procurement portal 2.0, **kppp.karnataka.gov.in.** Date and Time of Publication of Tender 24.12.2024 at 11.00 Hrs, Last date of Submission of bids 31.12.2024 at 17.00 Hrs, Date and Time of opening of Technical & Financial Bids 01.01.2025 at 17.30 Hrs, Tenders are invited through kppp portal only.

Sd/-
DIPR:CHN:507:2024-25 **Executive Engineer**
RDW & S Department, Chamarajanagara Division, Chamarajanagara

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BEFORE THE HON'BLE KARNATAKA ELECTRICITY REGULATORY COMMISSION
#16C-1, MILLER TANK BED AREA,
VASANTHANAGAR, BENGALURU - 560 052.

IN THE MATTER OF:

Application under Section 62 and 64 of The Electricity Act, 2003 read with KERC (Tariff) Regulations 2000 and KERC (Terms and Conditions for Determination of Transmission Tariff) Regulations 2006 and amendments, for approval of Annual Performance Review (APR) for FY 2023-24 and as per KERC (Multi Year Transmission, Distribution and Retail Supply Tariff) Regulations, 2024 Annual Revenue Requirement (ARR) to the Transmission Licensee KPTCL for MYT Period FY 2025-26, 2026-27 and 2027-28 and Transmission Tariff Application for the same period.

Karnataka Power Transmission Corporation Ltd (KPTCL)
Kaveri Bhavan, Bengaluru - 560 009 **..... Applicant**

NOTIFICATION of APR FOR FY-24 and ARR for FY-26, FY-27 and FY-28

1.0 In accordance with KERC (Terms and Conditions for determination of transmission tariff) Regulations 2006, and its amendments from time to time, the Karnataka Power Transmission Corporation Limited (KPTCL) has filed its Annual Performance Review (APR) for FY 2023-24, and as per KERC (Multi Year Transmission, Distribution and Retail Supply Tariff) Regulations, 2024, Annual Revenue Requirement (ARR) and Transmission Tariff applications for FY-2025-26, FY-2026-27 and FY-2027-28, before KERC for approval. These applications of KPTCL are under consideration of KERC.

2.0 In the APR Application for FY 2023-24, KPTCL has sought revised Annual Revenue Requirement (ARR) of Rs. 5849.45 Crore. The revenue gap claimed is Rs. 254.85 Crore, which is requested to be approved for recovery during FY 2025-26.

3.0 In the ARR of KPTCL for FY 2025-26, FY 2026-27 and FY 2027-28, the KPTCL has proposed to recover total Annual Revenue Requirement of Rs. 10,522.91 Crore, Rs. 10,954.71 Crore and Rs.12,158.05 Crore respectively through Transmission Charges of Rs. 2,62,254/MW/Month, Rs. 2,54,270/MW/Month and Rs. 2,71,283/MW/ Month.

Proposed Transmission Charges-Computation

(Amount Rs. in Crs)

Particulars		FY2025-26	FY2026-27	FY2027-28
A. Estimated Annual Revenue Requirement				
(a) O&M Charges		2697.12	2898.75	3399.67
(b) Depreciation		1914.23	2143.93	2401.21
(c) Interest & Finance Charges		1424.79	1628.23	1808.03
(d) Return on Equity		1627.17	1903.21	2226.06
(e) Other Charges		87.53	89.28	91.06
(f) Less: Other Income		180.97	206.30	235.19
(g) Government Portion of Contribution to P&G Trust payable by consumers, as per the decision of the Government.		2812.83	2845.75	2860.97
(h) Interest, Finance Charges and Other Expenses Capitalised		-307.96	-348.14	-393.76
(I) Amortized regulatory Asset as per KERC order dated 09.10.2020		193.32	-	-
(j) Revenue Gap for FY24		254.85	-	-
Annual Revenue Requirement:		**10522.91**	**10954.71**	**12158.05**
B. Estimated Expected Revenue from Charges @ existing tariff rates				
(a) Transmission Charges (in Rs/MW/Month)		262254	254270	271283
(b) Miscellaneous Charges		-	-	-
Total:		**262254**	**254270**	**271283**
Revenue Deficit	Government Portion of Contribution to P&G Trust payable by consumers, as per the decision of the Government.	2812.83	2845.75	2860.97
	Due to other components of estimated Annual Revenue Requirement	7710.08	8108.96	9297.08
	Total:	**10522.91**	**10954.71**	**12158.05**

C. Transmission Tariff / MW /Month:

Particulars	As Existing for FY2024-25	As Proposed for FY2025-26	As Proposed for FY2026-27	As Proposed for FY2027-28
Government Portion of Contribution to P&G Trust payable by consumers, as per the decision of the Government.	-	70,102	66,053	63,837
Other components of estimated Annual Revenue Requirement	1,63,760	1,92,152	1,88,217	2,07,446
Total:	**1,63,760**	**2,62,254**	**2,54,270**	**2,71,283**

4.0 In accordance with the provisions of Electricity Act 2003, KERC (Tariff) Regulations 2000, KERC (Terms and Conditions for Determination of Transmission Tariff) Regulations 2006 and amendments, and KERC (Multi Year Transmission, Distribution and Retail Supply Tariff) Regulations, 2024, it is hereby notified that persons who are interested in filing their objections to the above applications may file the same with the **Receiving Officer, KERC, #16 C-1, MILLER TANK BED AREA, VASANTHANAGAR, BENGALURU - 560 052** along with the documents which they want to rely upon, in six sets duly supported by an affidavit within **30 days** from the date of the first publication of this Notification.

5.0 For reference of those who are interested, copies of the KPTCL's Annual Performance Review (APR) and Annual Revenue Requirement (ARR) applications are available for inspection and for purchase at the following offices:

(1) Office of the Chief Engineers (Electy), Transmission Zones, KPTCL, Bengaluru, Tumakuru, Hassan, Mysuru, Bagalkote and Kalaburagi.
(2) The Accounts Officer (Public Relations), Corporate Office, KPTCL, Ground Floor, Kaveri Bhavan, Bengaluru.
(3) Corporate Offices of Electricity Supply Companies (ESCOMs) situated at Bengaluru, Mysuru, Mangaluru, Hubballi and Kalaburagi.

6.0 A full set of application is made available to the interested persons at the above offices on payment of **Rs. 116/-** for Kannada and English versions for each set of APR application and **Rs. 213/-** in Kannada version and **Rs. 214/-** in English version for each set of ARR application by cash or DD or they may also obtain required portion of the application, by paying photo copying charges @ **Rs. 1/-** per page, **within 10 working days** from the date of first publication of the notification. These documents are also available on the website of KPTCL **https://kptcl.karnataka.gov.in**

7.0 The objections have to be **filed with KERC only.** But as directed by KERC, in order to expedite the process of objection filing and replies thereon, the objectors are also requested to simultaneously send a copy of their objection directly to the **Managing Director, KPTCL, Corporate Office, Kaveri Bhavan, Bengaluru-560 009.** The last date for receipt of public objections is **30 days** from the date of first publication.

For Karnataka Power Transmission Corporation Limited
(Sd/-)
Managing Director,
KPTCL, Kaveri Bhavan, Bengaluru-560 009

The 600 sq.ft. structure is created with earthen plaster cob walls, a stone arched gateway, and a reciprocal frame living roof. ATIK BHEDA

How to build a cob house

Meet the architects who have designed House of Biomaterials, a community-built hand-sculpted cob house in Rishikesh that spotlights the region's biomaterials

HOUSING

Nidhi Adlakha

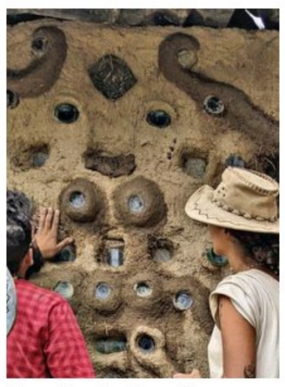
In 2021, as we were gradually easing out of the pandemic-induced lockdown, 90 volunteers from over 18 countries such as Japan, and the USA, arrived at a remote mountain Sal forest in Rishikesh, Uttarakhand. Not for an escape from the deadly virus, but to help build House of Biomaterials, a cob house that champions the use of bio-based and circular solutions.

Raghav and Ansh Kumar AISHWARYA LAKHANI

This was the first project of design innovation studio Tiny Farm Lab that is helmed by architect brothers Raghav and Ansh Kumar. Aimed at challenging the way we think and use materials, the studio launched in 2021 with the cob house.

Now famously known as Tiny Farm Fort, they say the project "was a consequence of a lifestyle choice". "Being locked down during the COVID-19 pandemic in New Delhi made us question our built environments.

Surrounded by uninspiring buildings, we both wanted to live closer to Nature, and learn from it," says Raghav, adding that they wanted to "build something sacred and authentic with our own hands along with a loving community".



Over 90 volunteers from over 18 countries helped build the house.

A majority of the construction materials were sourced from near the site. ATIK BHEDA

Work on House of Biomaterials – open as a bed and breakfast for people to stay and experience natural living – began in October 2021 and the project completed in April 2024. "However, the effective construction working days were 18 months," says Ansh, of the 600 sq.ft. structure created with earthen plaster cob walls, a stone arched gateway, and a reciprocal frame living roof (a self-supporting roof structure made of beams) that merges the building with the landscape. "Every delicate detail is hand-sculpted and tells the story of the over 90 volunteers who came via Workaway, a volunteer exchange website. We had put out a call for volunteers, and they all joined in to build this house with their labour of love," explains Ansh, adding that a majority of natural materials such as windows and slate table tops were consciously sourced within 150 metres or salvaged from old houses.

Earth and lime

"In a fast-paced world of mass production, people would see our approach of slow architecture as counter-intuitive," says Raghav, "Building with earth, lime, wood, and bamboo has been a practical choice for centuries.

"However, In the past few decades, houses made using natural materials have declined, and earth, bamboo, and thatch houses are seen as *kutcha* (weak or temporary). We wanted to improve the desirability and image of earthen buildings and debunk myths surrounding them."

Since the project has gone public, the duo say they have received enquiries for consultations for similar projects.

The duo calls House of Biomaterials (built at a cost of ₹20 lakh) an "exhibition of bioregional circular materials" in the shape of a community-built hand-sculpted cob house.

Aimed at showcasing how one can use natural materials to build structures that are not only beautiful and functional but enduring, it champions the use of cob. "There is a rise in natural calamities such as earthquakes, and forest fires due to climate change, which demands resilient construction methods.

Debunking myths

With this project, a "self-initiated demonstrator building", the brothers aim to debunk myths about mud houses, improve their desirability, and also generate livelihoods in the region. But having lived the urban life for decades with no rural connection, creating it was no mean feat. "The mountain life itself was quite challenging," admits Raghav, "The nearest motorable road to the site is 2 kms away and one had to hike 30 mins to reach the site. Although most materials were sourced near the site, the remote location made it challenging to carry materials that had to be sourced from the city, such as long wooden beams."

Alongside House of Biomaterials, the duo consult and design natural homes for clients.

"We are currently wrapping up an interior design project for a retail shop in Varanasi that we did in collaboration with Aishwarya Lakhani (Brown Dot Collaborative). The organic curves of the interiors and the finishes are inspired from Tiny Farm Fort.

We just started renovating a 90-year-old house in Rishikesh," says Raghav, who is also planning to host a workshop at their studio on how to research, map the bioregion's materials.

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Manmohan Singh, a hero of Indian middle class

This section became supportive of the economic policies in the early 1990s, as they brought tangible benefits in the form of tax breaks and raising of income tax ceiling

Nagesh Prabhu
BENGALURU

Former prime minister Manmohan Singh, who passed away on December 26, has largely contributed to the expansion of the size of the Indian middle class. He was seen as the chief architect of India's economic liberalisation during his tenure as the finance minister in the early 1990s. Later, he played a vital role in transforming India's economy as the prime minister for a decade (2004-2014).

Since the early 1990s, the middle class became supportive of the new economic policies as they brought tangible economic benefits to them in the form of tax breaks and raising of the personal income tax ceiling. Moreover, foreign investment and expansion of industries, particularly the service sector, provided opportunity for job change and higher salaries for the middle class.

The easy availability of consumer items after the initiation of the reforms led to the emergence of the middle class as an economic heavyweight in India. FILE PHOTO

The middle class appreciated Dr. Singh's style of politics since he was largely free from all ideological hues and was practical with an open mind. When he became the prime minister under the UPA-I regime, the middle class began feeling proud that they had a world-class economist and Oxford graduate as their PM. Even the NRI community shed its bias against the 'dynasty', and Dr Singh emerged as their symbolic hero.

Many scholars argued that liberal economic policies initiated in the 1990s by Dr. Singh, under the leadership of then prime minister P. V. Narasimha Rao, shifted the role of the middle class and their attitudes, lifestyles, and consumption practices. The easy availability of consumer items, such as cell phones, rising wage levels for the managerial staff of MNCs, and expanding consumer choice for goods, such as cars, washing machines, and colour television, led to the emergence of the middle-class as an economic heavyweight in India.

New opportunities provided by the success of economic reforms contributed to expansion of the service industry, specifically IT and BT, and contributed to the rise of the salaried class of women.

Besides the emergence of a vibrant middle class with spending power, the policies gave birth to a new generation of industrialists and entrepreneurs who began to compete globally. The outcome was real GDP clocking over 8% every year since 2004, accompanied by a jump in innovation activities and start-ups.

Increase in middle class

The size of the middle class increased as the percentage of people living below poverty line declined from 37% in 2004-05 to 22% in 2011-12. Many people joined the aspirational class owing to the UPA's policy of 'reforms with a human face', and inclusive policies, such as Food Security Act and Employment Guarantee Act, which were designed to protect the poor.

With the change of government in 2004, the World Bank too adopted 'structural adjustment reforms with human face' in its 2004 and 2008 policies, and began lending to 'lagging' states, such as Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, and Rajasthan.

Veteran and former *The Hindu* journalist Harish Khare, who served as the media adviser to the PM's Office from June 2009 to January 2012, in his book, said the middle class had enthusiastically voted for Manmohan Singh in 2009.

A couple of political scientists said that the credit for swelling the ranks of the middle class should go to the two terms of UPA regime under Manmohan Singh, which pursued economic liberalisation, opening up new opportunities to raise the income levels of the aspiring families. The middle class, which started expanding, also began pushing the politicians to embrace economic liberalisation and globalisation.

But the Congress appears to have failed to tap the middle class sentiments, which the BJP and current Prime Minister Narendra Modi used to their electoral advantage in the 2014 Lok Sabha elections. The alleged 'policy paralysis' of the UPA-II government during its last years of rule apparently caused discontent among the middle class, which supported the India Against Corruption (IAC) movement. The middle class that was the product of the policies of the Congress, apparently caused the defeat of the grand old party in 2014, and in subsequent Lok Sabha elections.

Leaders condole Singh's death

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Expressing deep sorrow over the death of former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda described him as a leader who effectively brought India out of severe economic distress during his tenure as Finance Minister.

"This is an extremely sad day. I am deeply grieved by his death. He was a statesman and a senior leader who served the country for decades. His passing away is a great loss for me," Mr. Gowda said during a condolence meeting organised here at the Janata Dal (Secular) office even as he recalled his association with Mr. Singh.

"I first met him in 1991 during my initial tenure in Lok Sabha. I had criticised him a lot and questioned many of his policies. However, his introduction of economic reforms - liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation - brought substantial change and progress to the country. It was a monumental development," he said and termed Mr. Singh as a "simple, honest and sincere person who was known for integrity".

Mr. Gowda said: "Mr. Singh took several measures to stabilise the country's economic situation during a period of extreme crisis and India had pledged 130 tonnes of gold then. It was a grim situation, but he managed his responsibilities with remarkable competence."

Union Minister for Heavy Industries and Steel H.D. Kumaraswamy, who paid last respects to Mr. Singh in Delhi, said that his vision and leadership left indelible mark on the country, and his service to the nation both as economist and PM will always be remembered.

Former Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa termed Mr. Singh as a visionary statesman known for his integrity and remarkable contributions to India's economic progress. Leader of the Opposition R. Ashok, BJP State president B.Y. Vijayendra, and former CM Basavaraj Bommai also condoled his death.

Former Prime Minister was connected to Karnataka in many ways, said 'people see India through the prism of Bengaluru'

Nagesh Prabhu
BENGALURU

Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, who passed away on December 26, contributed to the growth of Karnataka in many ways, but what stands out is him saying that 'people see India through the prism of Bengaluru'.

As the Prime Minister in UPA-1, he provided debt relief to farmers through waiver of entire overdue interest and rescheduling of overdue loans as on June 30, 2006. He had waived crop loans amounting to ₹72,000 crore during the UPA-I regime.

Under the Prime Minister's Rehabilitation Package, Karnataka received ₹2,689.64 crore for providing relief to small farmers in Belagavi, Chikkamagaluru, Chitradurga, Hassan, Kodagu, and Shivamogga districts.

The package benefited many small farmers.

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh inaugurating the Namma Metro project at B.R.V. Parade Grounds in Bengaluru on June 24, 2006. Union Finance Minister P. Chidambaram, Union Minister for Road and Transport K.H. Muniyappa, Union Minister for Urban Development Jaipal Reddy, Chief Minister of Karnataka H.D. Kumaraswamy, former Chief Minister N. Dharam Singh, and Governor T.N. Chaturvedi are seen. FILE PHOTO

During his visit to Bengaluru, when Dharam Singh was leading a coalition government in Karnataka, Mr. Singh interacted with farmers in an auditorium of the Bangalore University.

He provided several inputs to farmers and expressed his government's commitment to the welfare of farmers and the poor.

Later, for development of agriculture, Mr. Singh set up a National Commission on Farmers, headed by scientist M.S. Swaminathan, which recommended measures to boost the rural economy. This contributed to the revision of minimum support price.

Following the success of the Rural Development & Self Employment Training Institute (RUDSETI) set up in 1982 at Ujire in Dakshina Kannada district, by D. Veerendra Heggade with the support of Canara Bank and former Syndicate Bank, the Manmohan Singh government replicated the model at the all-India-level.

As Prime Minister in UPA-1, Manmohan Singh provided debt relief to farmers through waiver of overdue interest and rescheduling of overdue loans as on June 30, 2006

He suggested that the Union Rural Development Ministry establish one Rural Self-Employment Training Institute (RSETI) in each district in 2008-09. RSETIs aim to train rural unemployed youth to take up self-employment ventures. Now, India has close to 600 RSETIs.

To monitor the work of RSETIs promoted by different banks, a National Centre for Excellence of RSETIs (NACER) was established in 2011 in Bengaluru.

The Centre has bestowed on Dr. Heggade the honour of being the co-chairman of the NACER Committee of RSETIs.

Connections with Bengaluru

Former Chief Minister late S.M. Krishna, who served as External Affairs Minister in the UPA government, always used to recall Mr. Singh's statement that 'people see India through the prism of Bengaluru'.

On October 4, 2017, Dr. Singh inaugurated the academic session of Bengaluru B.R. Ambedkar School of Economics (BASE) at Ambedkar Bhavan, and noted the absence of the Planning Commission.

He appreciated Bengaluru's contribution to education and development.

During his visit in 2017, Mr. Singh appreciated the development model adopted by the government of Karnataka, led by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah. He said that Karnataka was the first State to implement the Food Security Act enacted by the UPA government.

Mr. Singh inaugurated the Kempegowda International Airport in 2008, and flagged off the city's first metro train from Baiyappanahalli to M.G. Road in 2011.

On December 27, 2001, Mr. Singh visited the Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC), Bengaluru to participate in a seminar on 'Life and Works of Prof. V.K.R.V. Rao'. Being a former Union Finance Minister, he lauded Prof. Rao's contributions in various areas of economics, and as an institution builder.

In June 2006, Mr. Singh laid the foundation stone for the construction of elevated highway connecting Bengaluru city with the Electronics City.

Setting up economic policy research centre in Singh's memory announced

The Hindu Bureau
BELAGAVI

Ministers and Congress leaders paid rich tributes to Manmohan Singh, former Prime Minister, in a public condolence meeting in Belagavi on Friday besides announcing that an economic policy research centre will be set up in his memory.

A huge pandal and stage erected for Gandhi Bharata, the centenary celebrations of the 1924 Belgaum Congress session at the CPEd grounds, was turned into a condolence meeting venue.

All government and party programmes scheduled for Friday were cancelled due to the death of Mr. Singh. The State government had earlier planned the unveiling of a statue of Mahatma Gandhi in front of the Suvarna Soudha, the seat of the Winter Session of the Karnataka legislature in Belagavi on the Pune- Bengaluru NH.

The Congress had planned a public rally in which leaders like AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge and Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi were supposed to speak. The 'Jai Bapu, Jai Bheem, Jai Samvidhan' rally was to be inaugurated in Belagavi on Friday and was to end in Mhow in Madhya Pradesh, the birth place of B.R. Ambedkar on January 26. All these events were cancelled. The rescheduled dates will be announced later, party leaders said.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar at a condolence meeting in Belagavi on Friday. P.K. BADIGER

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah described Mr. Singh's life as nothing less than a miracle. "Born in an ordinary household in a rural area, he went on to be one of the greatest economists of the country. All that was achieved by honest hard work. Despite enjoying several important positions of power, he remained humble and polite. His life offers us several lessons," he said.

"As Leader of the Opposition and the Chief Minister, I met him several times. Every time he would receive us cordially, speak to us with affection and respect and listen to us patiently. We invited him for the inauguration of the Dr. Ambedkar School of Economics. We also invited him for a programme regarding the State's economy. He congratulated us on the strong financial status of Karnataka and about its status as a growing economy," Mr. Siddaramaiah said. "During the 1990s, he pulled the country out from the brink of poverty. He opened up the Indian economy to the world and introduced schemes and programmes that benefitted millions," he said. "He had said history would be kinder to him. These words have become prophetic," Mr. Siddaramaiah said.

"The State government will establish an economic policy research centre in the memory of Mr. Singh," Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar said.

"Mr. Singh was an economist of global repute. His policies not only led to high growth, but were also aimed at welfare of the poor. His thoughts need to be studied further and given a concrete shape. We hope to do that with the centre. Minister M.C. Sudhakar will discuss with the authorities in Bangalore University and finalise the details," Mr. Shivakumar said.

Kohli family in Hubballi mourns demise of Manmohan Singh

Girish Pattanashetti
HUBBALLI

As the country mourns the demise of former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, a family in Hubballi recalled the simplicity of the economist, on whom power and position never made any impact.

Seven decades ago, Harnam Singh Kohli chose Hubballi to start a business of automobile spare parts, which is now being run by his second son Manmeet Singh. He is married to Harpreet Kaur Kohli, the younger sister of Gurusharan Kaur, wife of Mr. Manmohan Singh.

Although related to the former Prime Minister of India, the simple and soft-spoken Kohlis never showed off their 'high-profile connection'. The connection came to light only after a section of the media highlighted it after Mr. Manmohan Singh became the Prime Minister.

When the Congress won the general elections, the Kohli family sat in front of the television set to watch Mr. Manmohan Singh take the oath of the office of the Prime Minister. They rejoiced by distributing sweets and bursting crackers. Although Mr. Manmohan Singh never visited the Kohlis in Hubballi, the Kohli family regularly visited the Singhs in New Delhi. The visits came down subsequently because of security restrictions.

Harnam Singh Kohli's family with former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's family in New Delhi in 2018. Harnam Singh Kohli of Hubballi is married to Harpreet Kaur, the younger sister of Gurusharan Kaur, the wife of Manmohan Singh. FILE PHOTO

When Harpreet Kaur passed away at the age of 67 in 2010, Gurusharan Kaur had come to Hubballi, accompanied by her daughter Daman Singh Kaur, to take part in the final rituals. The duo stayed in the Hubballi Circuit House for two days. They took part in the 'antim ardas' (final prayer) at the gurdwara at Deshpande Nagar in Huballi. As it was a private visit, Gurusharan Kaur made it a point to settle all the bills personally at the Circuit House.

Harnam Singh Kohli, now 84, is not able to communicate much because of age-related factors, but his son Manmeet Singh recalled Mr. Manmohan Singh's humility and care. The Kohlis had last gone to meet the Singhs in New Delhi in 2018. Of late, they were in touch through telephone. He termed Mr. Manmohan Singh's demise a great loss. His brother Parminder Singh Kohli will take part in the funeral.

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH

SAD DEMISE

Mrs. HUSNARA RAZA

It is with profound sadness that we announce the passing of beloved wife of Mr. Moosa Raza and cherished mother of Jafar, Shahla, Gazala & Maliha. She departed this world peacefully on 26 Dec 2024, leaving behind a legacy of love kindness & grace. She will be dearly missed by her children, grandchildren, extended family, friends. While her absence leaves an immeasurable void her memory will continue to inspire & guide us.

Funeral Details :

The Namaze Janaza will be held on Saturday, 28 Dec 2024 after Zuhr prayers at Amirunnisa Begum burial ground Royapettah Chennai.

May her soul rest in eternal peace.

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Anna University sexual assault: Separate committee to look into case, says Minister

According to Govi Chezhiaan, around 80% of the CCTV cameras on the campus are working. The overgrown shrubbery on the campus will be removed, says Mr. Chezhiaan, adding that more streetlights will be installed soon

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu Higher Education Minister Govi Chezhiaan on Friday said Anna University has constituted a separate committee with senior faculty, women members, and student representatives to look into the case of sexual assault. He added that the State government would take measures to improve security on the Anna University campus, where a girl student was sexually assaulted earlier this week.

"The unfortunate incident at Anna University was brought to the notice of the government. The university has a POSH [Prevention of Sexual Harassment] committee, and we have instructed that the students can approach the committee for redressal of their grievances," Mr. Chezhiaan said.

Taking stock: Higher Education Minister Govi. Chezhiaan meeting Anna University faculty members on Friday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

"This is an issue concerning the university and students' education. The university is fully cooperating with the inquiry conducted by the police and the National Women's Commission," he added.

According to the Minister, around 80% of the CCTV cameras on the campus are working.

The overgrown shrubbery on the campus will be removed, said Mr. Chezhiaan, adding that more streetlights will be installed soon. The Minister further said measures to improve security and prevent such incidents in other universities would also be taken. Anna University has constituted a separate committee with senior faculty, women members, and student representatives to look into the issue, he added.

Gnanasekaran, the man arrested for allegedly sexually assaulting the student four days ago, had easy entry to the campus as his wife was one of the workers outsourced to maintain the campus, the Minister said.

"The incident happened around 8 p.m. The man was a frequent visitor to the campus according to the security staff. Henceforth, visitors will have to show ID cards, and vehicles must be photographed before they are permitted to enter," the Minister said. "We shall hold meetings to increase security on the campus and in all the engineering colleges and other universities under our purview to prevent such incidents," he said.

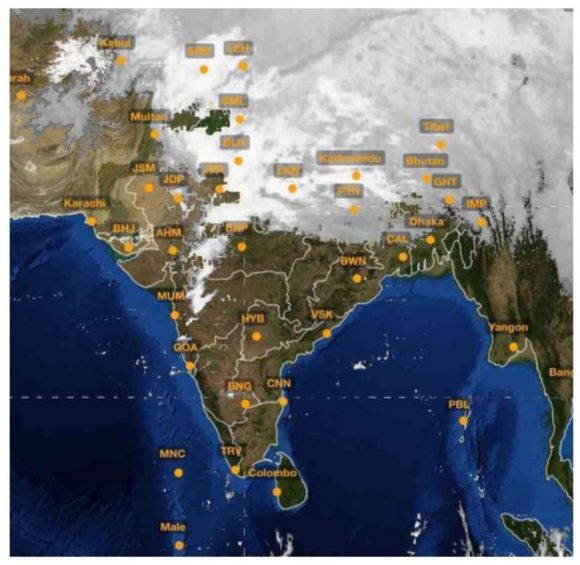
On December 23, two mechanical engineering students, both hostellers, were walking post-dinner in a less frequented area of the campus, when Gnanasekaran approached them. He allegedly sexually assaulted the girl, a first-year student, after beating up her friend, a final-year student.

The girl then lodged a complaint with the Kotturpuram police station.

Mr. Chezhiaan said the university had a POSH committee but the student had not approached it after the incident. He also added that awareness programmes on POSH had been conducted for students. The students on the campus, however, said they were not aware of the existence of such a committee.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 17.00 HRS)

Forecast for Saturday: Thunderstorm accompanied with hailstorm & lightning at isolated places over Madhya Pradesh and Sikkim; with lightning at isolated places over Uttar Pradesh, Vidarbha, Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Madhya Maharashtra and Marathwada.

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	27.0	12.0	Kozhikode	—	34.0	25.0
Ahmedabad	—	28.0	16.0	Kurnool	0.6	30.0	22.0
Aizawl	—	26.0	11.0	Lucknow	—	27.0	14.0
Allahabad	—	29.0	15.0	Madurai	—	33.0	24.0
Bengaluru	0.9	27.0	20.0	Mangaluru	—	33.0	23.0
Bhopal	—	28.0	17.0	Mumbai	—	33.0	21.0
Bhubaneswar	—	28.0	17.0	Mysuru	—	30.0	18.0
Chandigarh	—	19.0	7.0	New Delhi	4.9	18.0	13.0
Chennai	2.0	30.0	23.0	Patna	—	26.0	13.0
Coimbatore	0.1	31.0	23.0	Port Blair	—	31.0	25.0
Dehradun	—	20.0	8.0	Puducherry	3.9	30.0	24.0
Gangtok	—	14.0	7.0	Pune	—	31.0	16.0
Goa	—	—	—	Raipur	—	28.0	17.0
Guwahati	—	27.0	13.0	Ranchi	—	27.0	13.0
Hubballi	—	28.0	20.0	Shillong	—	22.0	12.0
Hyderabad	—	27.0	20.0	Shimla	—	14.0	6.0
Imphal	—	23.0	8.0	Srinagar	—	5.0	-7.0
Jaipur	—	19.0	14.0	Thiruvananthapuram	—	33.0	23.0
Kochi	—	31.0	24.0	Tiruchi	0.6	31.0	23.0
Kohima	—	15.0	5.0	Vijayawada	—	30.0	21.0
Kolkata	—	27.0	16.0	Visakhapatnam	—	28.0	22.0

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

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Hyderabad	.14	8	24	 53	...103	
Kolkata	.27	..47	14	... 188	...144	
Lucknow	.15	7	16	... 241	...167	
Mumbai	...7	..50	..2	... 264	...170	
Pune	.23	..84	56	... 142	...125	
Visakhapatnam	...9	..47	33	... 113	88	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Delhi recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 353 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Chikkaballapur, Karnataka recorded a healthy AQI score of 24

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

HC allows takeover of estate land to house landslide-hit

The Hindu Bureau
KOCHI

The Kerala High Court on Friday upheld the State government decision to take over a portion of the land in the possession of Harrisons Malayalam Limited, a plantation company, and Elstone Tea Estate Limited for establishing new townships for rehabilitating Wayanad landslide survivors.

Justice Kauser Edappagath passed the verdict while disposing of the writ petitions filed by the estate companies challenging the government decision to acquire 65.41 acres in the possession of Harrisons Malayalam Limited's Nedumbala Estate in Vythiri and 78.73 acres from Elston Estate in Pulpara.

The court ordered that the government is free to proceed to take over the properties for rehabilitation/reconstruction of landslide survivors in accordance with law.

Compensation

The court also directed the State government to determine the total amount of compensation to be awarded to the petitioners for taking over the land, in accordance with the provisions of the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement (LARR) Act, 2013. It shall be paid to the petitioners before taking possession of the land, it said. The court made it clear that the petitioners shall be entitled to pursue the statutory remedies available to them under the provisions of the LARR Act, 2013, for enhancement of compensation if they are not satisfied with the amount fixed by the State government.

The court observed that a citizen's ownership right over a property is always subject to the right of the state to take it for a public purpose. The decision of the government to take over the properties for rehabilitating landslide victims is a public purpose.

Advocate General K. Gopalakrishna Kurup submitted that around 1,210 families who were rendered homeless as a result of the landslides are accommodated temporarily on rented premises, and thus, it was "a very urgent and imminent necessity" to rehabilitate them permanently.

The petitioners said the government could not take over the land from private entities by under the provisions of the Disaster Management Act, 2005 without payment of compensation.

Waqf Tribunal seeks 122-year-old record for Munambam case

The Hindu Bureau
KOCHI

The Kerala Waqf Tribunal has sought a 122-year-old land transaction document between the erstwhile king of Travancore and Siddique Sait, a Kerala trader, to decide on the nature of the Munambam land.

The transaction between Sait and the former king took place in 1902.

The row began after the Kerala State Waqf Board laid claim to 404 acres of land at Munambam in Ernakulam district, leading to protests from residents.

Sait's successors and the Waqf Tribunal argue that Farook College, Kozhikode, which received the property as a Waqf (an endowment for charitable or religious purposes) illegally sold off the property. However, the college authorities say they obtained the property from the successors of Sait as a gift, which they could transact.

Hearing on Jan. 25

The college authorities later moved the tribunal challenging the board's decision to enlist and register the Munambam land as a Waqf property.

Rajan Thattil, judge (Chairman) of the Waqf tribunal, who considered the case on Friday asked the parties to the litigation to produce the document when the forum takes up the case on January 25.

The judge noted that only those properties on which the possessor had absolute title could be dedicated as Waqf.

Webinar unveils methods to manage emotional well-being of students

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

The Hindu in School hosted a webinar on "connecting with students and understanding their emotions" on Friday.

Over 5,000 educators from across the country attended the webinar that focused on the emotional well-being of students. Understanding and connecting with students' emotions is fundamental to effective teaching and learning, and the webinar was aimed at addressing this need by offering insights and practical tools for educators.

Psychologist and author Aruna Sankaranarayanan addressing the webinar on Friday. Sridhar Aranala of The Hindu Group spoke.

Aruna Sankaranarayanan, psychologist, author, and visiting faculty at Azim Premji University, provided practical solutions for connecting with students emotionally. She shared methods that educators can adopt for better understanding of students' emotions.

One of the highlights of her talk was the introduction of the RULER model of emotional intelligence, which offers a structured framework for educators to improve their interactions with students. It stands for recognising emotions in oneself and others, understanding the causes and consequences of emotions, labelling emotions accurately, expressing emotions appropriately, and regulating emotions effectively. She highlighted how these techniques could be integrated into daily teaching practices to foster better emotional awareness in both teachers and students.

Sridhar Aranala, vice-president, sales and distribution, The Hindu Group, explained how understanding and managing the emotional landscape of Generation Z is crucial for teachers, especially considering diminishing attention spans.

The webinar was held exclusively for subscribers to The Hindu Group's educational products. To stay updated on upcoming events, educators can scan the QR code provided and register for notifications about future value-added initiatives by The Hindu Group's school vertical.

U.S. issued more than 1 million non-immigrant visas to India

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

For the second year in a row, the U.S. Mission to India issued more than one million non-immigrant visas, including a record number of visitor visas, underscoring the huge demand of Indians for tourism, business, and education.

In the last four years, the number of visitors has also increased by five times, and more than two million Indians travelled to the United States in the first eleven months of 2024, a 26% increase over the same period in 2023, the U.S. Consulate General Hyderabad said on Friday.

"Over five million Indians already have a non-immigrant visa to visit the U.S. and each day, the Mission issues thousands more," it stated.

The Department of State, it said, was working to formally establish a U.S.-based programme in 2025 for the renewal process for thousands of applicants.

A pilot programme to renew H-1B visas was completed this year, to allow specialty occupation workers from the country to renew their visas without leaving the United States.

The U.S. Mission, it further added, issued tens of thousands of immigrant visas, facilitating legal family reunification and the migration of skilled professionals. These visa-holders became permanent residents upon their arrival in the U.S.

More than 24,000 passports and other consular services to American citizens living and travelling in India were offered. Year 2024 also saw Smart Traveller Enrolment Programme (STEP), a free service for enrolling trips abroad so that the department can quickly contact them in cases of emergency.

More Indian students than ever before now have U.S. student visas.

India became the top sender of international students for the first time since the 2008-2009 academic year with more than 3,31,000 students overall studying in the States this year. Besides, India also remains the largest sender of international graduates to the U.S. for the second year; Indian graduate student numbers increased by 19% to reach over 200,000 students. "Many exchange visitors will now be able to stay in the States and not need to return home for two years after completing their programmes there, offering more opportunities to further their careers and education. ," it added.

Mayor meets Kerala BJP chief, sparks row

The Hindu Bureau
THRISSUR

Communist Party of India (CPI) leader V.S. Sunilkumar has strongly criticised M.K. Varghese, Mayor of the Left Democratic Front (LDF)-led Thrissur Corporation, for meeting BJP State president K. Surendran on Christmas day.

The incident occurred during the BJP's Sneha Sandesha Yathra' campaign, where Mr. Surendran visited Mr. Varghese and gave him a Christmas cake.

Mr. Sunilkumar alleged that the gesture revealed the Mayor's "support" for the BJP, despite his position in the LDF-led Corporation.

He accused the Mayor of political opportunism and claimed that receiving a cake from the BJP State president was part of a calculated political move.

Responding to the criticism, Mr. Varghese defended his actions, stating that he would "welcome anyone" who visited his residence on Christmas Day. "I don't have to convince Mr. Sunilkumar about what I am doing here," he said.

Conduct polls to local bodies only after fixing BC quota: BRS

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

The president of Telangana Jagruthi, the cultural wing of Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS), and party MLC K. Kavitha has asked the State not to conduct the local bodies' elections without finalising the 42% reservation to Backward Classes (BCs), as promised before the Assembly elections.

Speaking after a meeting with representatives of about 40 BC bodies here on Friday, she sought to know how the State government was planning to provide 42% reservation to BCs without knowing the BC population. "While BC communities comprise over 50% of the population, how is the Congress planning to restrict the quota to just 42%," she asked.

K. Kavitha

Stating that BRS would oppose conduct of the local bodies' elections without a 42% quota being ensured to the BC communities, she asked the government to consider holding elections only after the report of the BC Dedicated Commission was submitted.

She demanded that the Centre too take up the caste census as part of the general census. She questioned the State on the status of its pre-poll promise of ₹20,000 crore budgetary allocation to BC communities.

Suspended IAS officer seeks clarity on memo

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Suspended IAS officer N. Prasanth has written to Kerala Chief Secretary Sarada Muraleedharan seeking clarification on the charge memo issued to him earlier this month.

In a letter, Mr. Prasanth has requested information, including the source of the "alleged social media posts," which was purportedly relied upon when issuing the chargesheet, and how "official cognizance" was taken of a particular social media exchange among many. He also wanted to know whether the authenticity of the posts was confirmed using official tools. He said he required them to "respond appropriately and in adherence to the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness".

The issue pertains to an inquiry report allegedly prepared by Additional Chief Secretary (Finance) Mr. Jayathilak blaming Mr. Prasanth for the disappearance of files related to the Unnathi project. Ms. Muraleedharan declined to comment on the matter.

Letter and spirit

The new detention policy seeks to address a real issue, but it fails

Among the key school education reforms instituted by the UPA government as part of the Right to Education were Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) and a 'no detention' policy up to Class 8. Both sought to create a benign environment in school so that there was no pressure of final examinations and "standards" on the child. The CCE was to be executed from Class 6, in discrete steps throughout the year, which meant no scary final test of just academic achievement based on a year-long curriculum. Whether those reforms contributed to the current situation or not, the reality is that a significant number of students passing out of primary school do not have foundational numeracy and literacy. And they do not seem to catch up by the time they leave middle school. Recognising the gap in achieving learning outcomes, the NDA government sought to do away with the no detention policy, in 2019, leaving it to the appropriate State governments. The CCE was given up too. But the COVID-19 pandemic intruded and made it impossible for schools to even consider detaining students. The recent notification of the Ministry of Education has removed the discretion given to State governments. It has mandated a final examination at the end of Class 5 and Class 8, which will assess a child's competence. If he or she is not found to be competent, the child will be re-examined after two months after additional instruction. If the child fails again, he or she will be detained. The rules say no child should be expelled before completing elementary education.

Practical necessity is driving this change in norms. Steps do need to be taken to address the gap in the learning outcomes achievement. An educated, capable and skilled population is needed to reap the demographic dividend. It takes an entire neighbourhood to educate a child, not just the school and parents. The dismal situation in learning outcomes is a collective failure of society that needs to be addressed. But it would take a lot more than this particular change in policy to trigger a turnaround. CBSE-affiliated and other private schools can easily implement the new policy. However, for some States, it will be a political hot potato. Private schools should not use this as an excuse to expel poor performing students – safeguards would be needed. A sad consequence of the policy is that it brings back a single final examination as an arbiter of a child's promotion or detention. While NEET or the JEE may be taken as special cases applying to extremely competitive professions, to bring back one final test at the school level is a regression. The National Education Policy 2020, for instance, wants to replace summative assessment with formative, and promote self and peer assessments. It promises a "holistic, 360-degree, multidimensional progress report card" detailing the "progress and the uniqueness of each student". The new detention policy does not reflect the NEP's spirit.

Security in safety

Authorities must ensure public spaces are safe environs for all

People derive a sense of ease from what they perceive to be safe cloisters; they let their guard down in these areas and, relax. When an attack happens in safe environs, it would be a harsh betrayal of that sense of trust. In the recent case of sexual assault within the campus of Anna University, Chennai, there has not only been a vile violation of a young student's bodily integrity, but also, possibly as painful, a gross betrayal of trust. On December 23, in one of Tamil Nadu's top engineering institutes, Anna University, a public State-run institution, the engineering student and her friend, also a student, decided to take a walk after dinner. As they walked into a rather secluded neck of the woods, the horror began for them. A stranger there accosted the male companion, threatened him and then went on to sexually assault the girl. Traumatised by her ordeal, the girl called the police helpline – 100 – the next day, and a team from the all women's police station nearby reached the university and took her complaint. She gave a full account of the incident, assuring them that she would be able to identify the culprit if she were to see him again. On Wednesday, police arrested Gnanasekaran, a roadside vendor who has a bunch of petty cases against him, after he had been identified in an identification parade. Apparently, though not an employee, he used to frequent the varsity campus as his wife was a contract labourer employed by the university to work within the premises.

In the aftermath of the incident, the Higher Education Minister said more lights would be provided across the campus, and all the overgrown bushes trimmed. Efforts have also been initiated to regulate who enters the campus, by conducting an ID check before allowing visitors in. While the incident has provoked widespread outrage, it has also acquired varied political hues, with reactions from some quarters bordering on the absurd. What is essential is for the government to ensure, without a doubt, that every corner of all its educational institutions and their vast cloisters are safe for all students. Whatever needs to be done in aid of that should be done, costs notwithstanding. Additionally, the personal details of the complainant were revealed in the public realm, a clear violation of the law and repeated court guidelines. This too must never be allowed to happen another time. The alacrity displayed in apprehending the culprit should be extended to the filing of charges and securing a conviction for a just closure to this horrific crime.

Marginalised by caste, marginalised in education

Sumant Kumar

Associate Professor at the Alliance School of Liberal Arts, Alliance University, Bangalore

Atul Kumar, the son of a daily wage worker and from the Scheduled Caste community, lost his seat at IIT Dhanbad after he was unable to pay the seat booking fee of ₹17,500 that was required to secure his admission. His case gained widespread attention on social media, prompting the Supreme Court of India to intervene by exercising its extraordinary powers under Article 142 to grant him admission. There are many and similar cases like Atul's, but which never draw media attention or receive justice, leaving many deserving students without opportunities due to financial constraints and systemic inequalities.

The rise in tuition fees

The struggles that Dalit students face echo the challenges of pre-Independence India when they were barred from enrolling in educational institutions because of their caste. While these historical restrictions were overt, the situation now is more insidious. Under the "Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan", the Government of India has been pushing for self-reliance in institutions, leading to a significant increase in fees in many government colleges and universities such as the Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT), the Indian Institutes of Management, the central universities, and the National Law University. For instance, in 2016, the IIT council's standing committee agreed to increase the undergraduate tuition fees by 200%. This meant a fee increase from ₹90,000 to ₹3 lakh a year.

In response to the criticism regarding the fee increase, the committee set up by the government asserted that students from marginalised communities would benefit from the Vidyalakshmi scheme, which offers interest-free scholarships. However, while this initiative aims to provide support, it remains insufficient to fully address the financial challenges faced by these students, especially as fees continue to rise. The hike in fees that was implemented in seven IIMs including increased tuition fees; IIM-Lucknow hiked it by nearly 30%, IIM-Ahmedabad and IIM-Shillong by 5%, IIM Lucknow by 29.6%, IIM-Calcutta by 17.3%, IIM-Kozhikode by 23.1%, IIM-Ranchi by 19% and IIM-Tiruchirappalli by 20%. IIT-Delhi increased tuition fees for full-time M.Tech students in the semester in 2022-23. The total academic fee is now ₹53,100, which does not include hostel fees. This is a 100% increase from last year's fee of ₹26,450.

The frequent hikes in fees have made it increasingly difficult for students from the marginalised communities to afford higher education or even pursue studies through loans.

Rising costs in higher education are one of the many issues affecting Dalit students

With rising costs in the Indian education system, many students from the marginalised communities are unable to even consider enrolling in prestigious institutions such as the IITs and the IIMs despite securing competitive ranks. As a result, while some students manage to cope with the financial burden, there are others who are overwhelmed by the stress and the inequality in academic institutions. This pressure, exacerbated by the high cost of education, has a human angle too. In 2021, data showed that over the past seven years, 122 students from the IITs and the IIMs had ended their lives, many due to the financial strain of rising fees and the anxiety of securing employment.

The issue of dropouts

Another harsh reality is that many students who manage to enrol themselves in prestigious institutions eventually drop out due to their inability to afford rising education fees. The Human Resources Development Ministry reported that 2,461 students dropped out of IITs in just two years (2017 and 2018). Last year, this issue was raised in the Lok Sabha, revealing that over the past five years, more than 13,500 students from the Scheduled Castes (SC), the Scheduled Tribes (ST), and Other Backward Classes (OBC) had dropped out of courses in the central universities, the IITs and the IIMs. Government data showed that in the central universities, 4,596 students from the Other Backward Classes, 2,424 SC students, and 2,622 ST students dropped out during this period. In the IITs, 2,066 OBC students, 1,068 SC students, and 408 ST students left. Similarly, the IIMs saw 163 OBC, 188 SC, and 91 ST students drop out over the past five years. These numbers highlight the significant challenges faced by marginalised communities in accessing and sustaining higher education in India.

One of the key reasons behind the poor economic conditions of the Dalit community is that their identity in India is still largely defined by caste. Dalits continue to be denied the opportunity to perform work that is on a par with others in society. This has not only left them economically marginalised but also socially vulnerable. Dalits in India are considered an oppressed and discriminated class, often labelled as "untouchable". Historically, this stigmatisation has meant that Dalits have been denied access to education. The term "untouchables" also refers to those who have been forced into the most undesirable and degrading jobs. A recent survey in 29 States on urban sewer and septic tank workers revealed that 92% of these workers belong to Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), and Other Backward Classes (OBC). A 2019 report by former Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal revealed that 95% of faculty positions in IITs were held by individuals from upper caste backgrounds, with only 5% allocated to SC, ST, and OBC categories, despite these groups representing 70%-80% of India's population. An RTI filed by IIT-Bombay students further exposed the disparities, showing that 24 departments had no SC faculty, 15 lacked ST representation, and nine had no OBC faculty. These statistics highlight the deep-rooted caste-based inequalities that persist in both employment and education.

The barriers still exist

After Independence, with provisions in the Constitution and welfare mechanisms, Dalit school enrolment rates have improved over time However, Dalit children continue to face significant barriers in education, including poverty, social discrimination, and caste-based prejudice. Dalit students are often judged based on their clothes, language, and other markers, making it difficult for them to integrate with their upper caste peers.

In many cases, caste-based remarks and discrimination wound these students, leading to social isolation. Some students succumb to the emotional toll of this prejudice – there are cases such as a woman postgraduate medical student in a medical college in Maharashtra and two students from IIT Bombay and IIT Delhi that are painful reminders of this reality. These incidents underscore the persistent shadow of casteism and harassment over the aspirations of many Dalit students. This troubling situation raises a critical question: how can these prestigious institutions effectively address this issue and foster a safe, inclusive environment for all students?

The unfortunate incidents of student suicides point to the immense pressure students face in the education system. Many students are burdened by their families' expectations that completing a degree will solve their economic problems. But unemployment in India is also high. An RTI filed in 2024 about IIT placements showed that approximately 8,000 students (38%) across 23 IIT campuses remained unplaced this year. For students from the marginalised communities, this struggle is even more pronounced, as their caste identity often doubles the challenges they face in securing jobs. These issues underscore the pressing need for systemic reforms in education and employment to alleviate the pressures on students and address caste-based disparities.

Rules that still manacle the captive elephant

Shubhra Sotie

an environmental lawyer and Specialist, Wildlife Policy and Research at Humane Society International (HSI) India

In India, where elephants are revered as sacred symbols of wisdom and strength, privately-held captive elephants live a stark contradiction. Reflecting on this grim reality, the Kerala High Court recently likened the lives of these captive animals to an "eternal Treblinka", drawing a poignant comparison to the infamous Nazi extermination camps. Elephants used for religious purposes, entertainment and tourism are subjected to much cruelty and forced to behave in unnatural ways. These social animals are subjected to isolation and abusive training methods to break their spirit. Although elephants have the highest protection under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, they have been at the forefront of practices that seek to capture them from the wild for a life in captivity.

New rules and loopholes

In its intent to regulate potential misuse of captive elephants in private custody and curb illegal captures from the wild, the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) published the Captive Elephant (Transfer or Transport) Rules in March 2024. These rules facilitate the transport and the transfer of elephants and also specify the procedure of transfer of ownership.

However, the ambiguity in procedures and rationale for transport and/or transfer of wild elephants could pave the way for further commercial exploitation. For instance, it states that when an owner is no longer able to maintain an elephant, the ownership of that elephant may be transferred. However, there is no obligation for this exchange to be non-commercial. Elephants can, therefore, be traded as movable property.

The rules also provide for transport of the elephants temporarily. Again, there is no explicit requirement to justify the transportation of a privately owned elephant across or within State borders on an interim basis. States with a high number of privately owned elephants could potentially lease their elephants to serve as props, from religious ceremonies to weddings to political rallies. These are activities that compromise the welfare of elephants even as they objectify and commodify them. This regularisation of the transfer of elephants for religious activities, tourism, or any other commercial ventures effectively contributes to the economic valuation of elephants, treating them as tools for generating income. Thus, the legislation could be misused by private elephant owners to essentially "rent out" their animals, which risks incentivising the capture of wild elephants and directly undermines elephant conservation.

There are ambiguities in the Captive Elephant (Transfer or Transport) Rules that may facilitate illegal trade in elephants

Microchip misuse, births in captivity

As of January 2019, there were 2,675 documented captive elephants in the country, with a deeply disturbing implication. It has been reported that when these animals die, they are replaced by elephants captured from the wild. Most captive elephants were microchipped as part of a 2002 initiative that Project Elephant launched to track all captive elephants in India that have valid certificates of ownership. Anecdotes suggest that these microchips are retrieved from an elephant posthumously and then inserted into an elephant caught in the wild to legalise an illicit capture.

Despite this popular *modus operandi*, the Rules do not require the removal and the destruction of microchips implanted in captive elephants, which should be done in presence of forest officials. Moreover, the Rules do not require the submission of a post-mortem report in cases where an elephant dies during transfer or transportation, leaving a critical gap in monitoring and accountability. Worse, this fuels the never-ending cycle of elephants in captivity. This cycle is perpetuated by a provision in the Rules that recognises the birth of calves in captivity, allowing them to be legally classified as owned captive elephants.

What is required instead, is a mandate to implement humane, non-invasive birth control measures for elephants in private custody, to break the cycle of commercial exploitation and prevent more elephants entering captivity through birth. Additionally, a shift from using live elephants in temples, processions, and tourism to alternatives such as electronic elephants is crucial. Civil society, temple committees and the government should lead this change to protect wild elephants.

The trade between States

Further, there are numerous reports of elephants being transported from the northeastern States to the southern and western States. One such instance involved an elephant being "gifted" to a Delhi temple by a private owner in Assam. Unfortunately, in all these transfers, the new rules have served as an enabling agent for trade in an endangered species.

In August, following reports and objections submitted by this writer and others, the Elephant Project, under the aegis of MoEFCC, took action. It issued an office memorandum that flagged the illegal transfers of captive elephants. The memorandum reiterated the need for the strict adherence to Captive Elephant (Transfer or Transport) Rules, 2024 and emphasised the mandatory digitisation of the genetic profiles of captive elephants. The Ministry's efforts to address captive elephant transfers are commendable. Yet, they fail to adequately remedy these key issues in the Rules.

Regrettably, the legislation lacks the teeth to ensure the meaningful protection of captive elephants. Without language that speaks the welfare of elephants and safeguards them from any form of commercial exploitation, the paradox of the elephant being venerated as a sacred animal while also being the most exploited wild animal will persist.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Manmohan Singh

The passing of former Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh will be felt for long (December 27). Yet in his lifetime, he could best be faulted on being reticent, more correctly lacking a liberal tongue to grandstand on a Dalit theme or denigrating leaders in the Opposition at the drop of a hat. He went about his remit assiduously, much as a craftsman jeweller would be stringing the choicest pearls. He charted a new highway to India's economic progress. He steered the nation fairly through the economic epidemic that struck from the West. The astuteness he brought through his policies laid the foundation for the present-day vibrant economy.

R. Narayanan,
Navi Mumbai

India has lost a tall leader. When he was the Prime Minister, we felt safe. He was a leader who was respected by one and all. There was no deviousness and no vile and polarising talk. There was much respect for the diversity in India's demography.

Tara Fonseca,
Ponda, Goa

Dr. Manmohan Singh was a rare leader whose statesmanship and decency resonated across the political divide.
He was the first Prime Minister who saw the tomorrow. The way he shepherded the civil nuclear deal was a master move, earning him the moniker, 'Singh is King'. The gentle sardar of politics will continue to inspire us.

Dr. A.S. Farida,
Bengaluru

Dr. Manmohan's legacy is time tested and he will be remembered forever in the history of the country. He steered the country in two different junctures and ushered in a new era of liberalisation, redefining democracy in his own way.

Sateesh Reddy Kanaganti,
Thipparthy, Nalgonda, Telangana

Manmohan Singh's journey, from humble beginnings to the pinnacle of Indian leadership, is an inspiring tale of intellect and perseverance. He will remain a symbol of transformative leadership and public service. His legacy of progress will inspire generations.

Amarjeet Kumar,
Hazaribagh, Jharkhand

Corrections & Clarifications

In the front page report, "Nation mourns former PM Manmohan Singh,..." (December 27, 2024), the name of his wife was mentioned as Gurcharan Singh. It should have been Gursharan Kaur.

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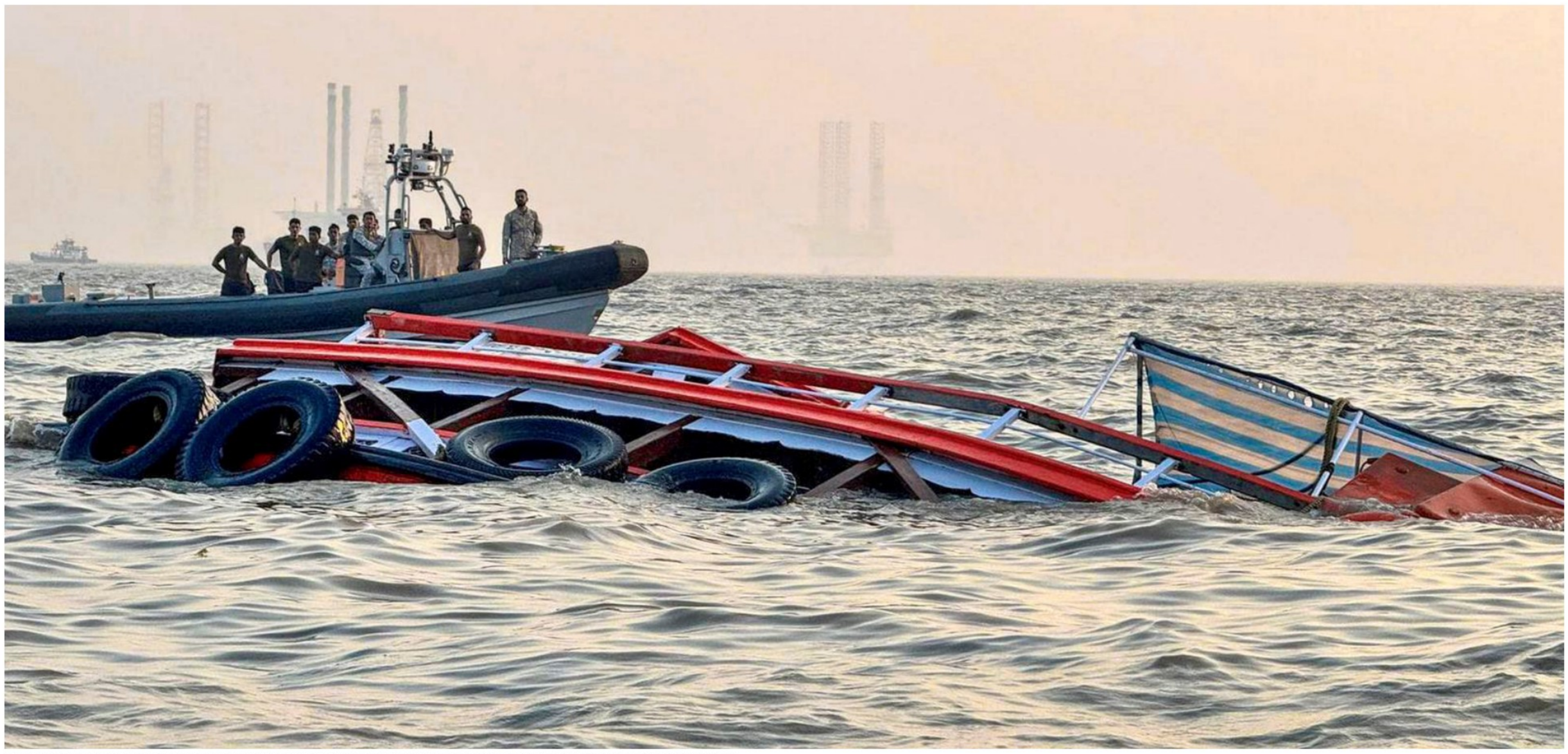
Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name.



Rescue work underway after a ferry capsized off the coast of Mumbai when a Navy speedboat crashed into it on December 18, 2024. PTI

In Mumbai, a joyride that turned fatal

On December 18, a collision between a ferry and an Indian Navy speedboat in the Arabian Sea off the coast of Mumbai claimed 15 lives, raising concerns about safety and alleged negligence by the Navy. **Snehal Mutha** reports on the tragedy, the problem of overcrowding, the lack of adequate life jackets for passengers on ferries, and the complaints of ferry operators regarding the Navy's speedboats

It was at noon on December 18 that Tanvi Wakchaure saw her father, Deepchand, for the last time. Deepchand, a 45-year-old plumber, had dropped Tanvi, 17, at college in Govandi, an eastern suburb of Mumbai. He did not tell her where he was headed to next.

When he did not return by night, Deepchand's family, who live in the same area, started getting worried. "We began calling his friends one by one," says Tanvi.

They learned that Deepchand, an avid explorer, had boarded a ferry to Elephanta Island, located 9 nautical miles off the coast of Mumbai from the Gateway of India. Every day, about 3,000 people visit the UNESCO world heritage site, says Sardar J. Mahadkar, president of Jal Vahatuk Sahakari Santha Maryadit, an organisation representing ferry owners. The island is home to the rock-cut Elephanta Caves, which were constructed in the mid-5th and 6th centuries AD and reflect Hindu and Buddhist iconography.

"He liked to explore the city," says Deepchand's friend, Chandrakant Hevale. "That happened to be one of those days. When we found out that he had boarded the ferry and there had been an accident in the Arabian Sea, we rushed to the Colaba police station in the early hours of December 19." The Colaba police station is located about 600 metres from the Gateway of India.

The police asked the family and friends to go to the state-owned J.J. Hospital. On rushing to the hospital, the family found Deepchand's body.

"Just a day earlier, he and my mother had celebrated their wedding anniversary," remembers a distraught Tanvi.

At around 3.30 p.m. on December 18, an Indian Navy speedboat had rammed into the passenger ferry not far from Elephanta Island. The ferry capsized. Thirteen people, including Deepchand, died. Two remained missing, including a child. On December 19 and 21, their bodies were also recovered. The death toll increased to 15.

In deep water

Every day, during the off season (the rainy months of July-October), at least 25-30 rides are scheduled from the Gateway of India, an arch built in the Indo-Islamic style in the 20th century to commemorate the landing of King George V in India, to Elephanta Caves. During holiday season (October-January), this number increases to 50 or even 100, says Sardar.

On December 18, the last ferry of the day, Neel Kamal (blue lotus), had left the Gateway at 3:00 p.m. Neel Kamal had a capacity of 80 passengers, but it was carrying 110-115 passengers that day, says an investigation officer on the case from the Colaba police station.

Natharam Chaudhry, 24, a carpenter based in Kurla, was on the upper deck, enjoying the breeze, when the ferry was around 20 minutes from its destination, the Gharapuri jetty at Elephanta Island. He says many of his co-passengers were lounging on the lower deck.

Natharam was among the first to spot the Navy speedboat, but there seemed to be no cause for alarm. "I was fascinated, so I started shooting the speedboat with my phone camera," he says.

The speedboat took two sharp turns before hurtling towards the ferry. It rammed into the right side of the vessel "with a loud bang, like an earthquake," Natharam recollects. "We ran downstairs. The ferry started sinking on the right side, so everyone congregated on the left side."

> We raised concerns regarding the speed limits of the speedboats and about possible accidents
>
> **IQBAL MUKADAM**
> Secretary of Jal Vahatuk Sahakari Sanstha

Realising that there was no way he could balance himself on the sinking ferry, Natharam grabbed a life jacket, strapped it on, and jumped with his cousin and uncle into the cold water.

"The moment I jumped in, I thought of my parents. I panicked about what they would do without me. People were in the water shouting for help," he says.

Natharam went blank for a bit after that, but it was this quick-thinking action that saved his life. His uncle and cousin survived too.

Survivors allege that the ferry did not have enough life jackets. One survivor says, "The people who managed to access life jackets managed to live, while some others drowned."

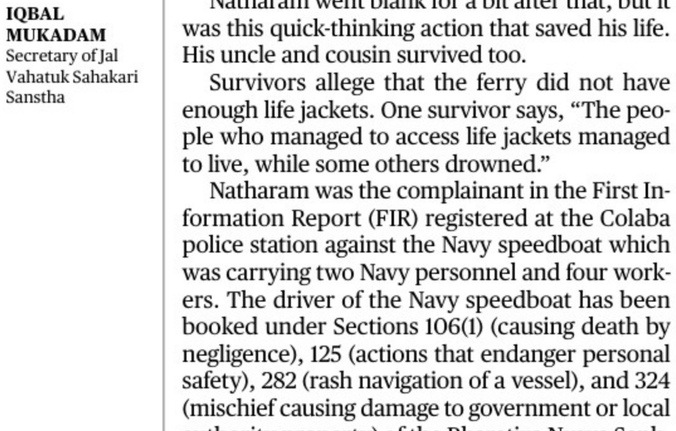
Natharam was the complainant in the First Information Report (FIR) registered at the Colaba police station against the Navy speedboat which was carrying two Navy personnel and four workers. The driver of the Navy speedboat has been booked under Sections 106(1) (causing death by negligence), 125 (actions that endanger personal safety), 282 (rash navigation of a vessel), and 324 (mischief causing damage to government or local authority property) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023. Natharam's video is now being treated as evidence by the police.

Within a few hours of the accident, the Indian Navy released a statement. It said that the speed boat, which was undergoing engine trials, "lost control and collided with a passenger ferry, Neel Kamal, off Karanja, Mumbai."

A Defence spokesperson explained the accident: "The throttle (acceleration) was stuck in the top position, preventing them from taking a turn or slowing down the boat."

Of the 115 people who were rescued, 13 people – one Navy personal and 12 civilians, including three workers on the speedboat – were declared dead by Mumbai's civic body and Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis. By December 21, two missing bodies were recovered from the sea.

The Chief Minister announced financial assistance of ₹5 lakh to the families of the dead. The Prime Minister's Office also announced an ex-gratia of ₹2 lakh for each family of the dead and ₹50,000 for the injured from the Prime Minister National Relief Fund. The Indian Navy has constituted a Board of Inquiry to probe the accident.



A video grab shows the speedboat before it crashed into the passenger ferry. PTI

> When I reached the spot, I found that nearly 95% of the ferry had sunk. Approximately 50 people, including children, were clinging to the tiny bit that remained above water.
>
> **ANMOL SHRIVASTAV**
> Captain of the JNPA pilot boat

The rescue operation

The survivors say they received help within 20-30 minutes of the accident.

A Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) patrol boat and a Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority (JNPA) pilot boat were the first to reach the spot. "We heard people screaming for help. We saw some people holding children tight and some clutching on to the boat, which was partially submerged in the water. We first focused on rescuing children," says a CISF officer, who was patrolling a 2-3 kilometre radius from the accident spot.

The officer says the biggest challenge was oil spillage. "The diesel from the ferry had spilled on the passengers. It became difficult for us to hold them and haul them up from the water as they kept slipping from our hands."

The captain of the JNPA pilot boat, Anmol Shrivastav, says he heard a distress call on radio channels 12 and 13 from an oil tanker, Tony, moored at Jawahar Dweep 5, a jetty at the Jawahar Dweep oil terminal on an island off the coast of Mumbai. The tanker reported that a ferry was sinking and requested urgent assistance.

"I checked my location and realised that I was only about five minutes from the incident site. When I reached the spot, I found that nearly 95% of the ferry had sunk. Approximately 50 people, including children, were clinging to the tiny bit that remained above water. There were 20-25 people floating nearby. Some were wearing life jackets and some were not," says Anmol.

Eleven Navy boats, three Marine Police boats, two Coast Guard boats, and four helicopters were also deployed in the area for the search-and-rescue operation, says a Defence spokesperson.

Along with the help of CISF personnel, the JNPA rescued 57 people, says Anmol. "The CISF's boat was lower in the water, allowing easier transfers. Together, we created a chain of rescue operations. The CISF pulled people from the water and transferred them to our pilot boat."

Later, the Mumbai Port Authority (MPA) pilot boat, Purva; the Naval ferry, Suvidha; and two fishing boats also began assisting in the rescue operations. Arif Bamne, a master (boat driver) with the MPA, says, "All we could hear was '*bachao bachao* (help, help)'. It felt like a scene from a film. A foreign couple helped us in rescuing people and performing CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) on those who were critical." The MPA helped in rescuing at least 35 passengers, he says.

The passengers also helped one another. "A German man who could swim well helped rescue a three-year-old child and gave him CPR. He also helped us rescue other passengers," says Anmol.

All the passengers were taken to the JNPT Hospital, the Navy Dockyard, Ashwini Hospital, St George's Hospital, and Karanja Hospital. The passengers were mostly from other districts, including Sangli, Dhule, Nagpur, and Nashik; and Goa and other regions.

The autopsy of 11 out of the 15 dead was carried out at the Indira Gandhi Rural Hospital in Uran in Navi Mumbai. "The reason for the death was asphyxiation due to drowning," said Medical Superintendent Dr.B.M Kalel. The rest were taken to J.J. Hospital.

Navy personnel Karmveer Yadav is still in a critical stage and undergoing treatment. Two people, a six-year-old boy and a 43-year-old man, went missing after the accident. Six Navy and three Coast Guard personnel were deployed to search for them.

On December 19, the rescue team found the body of the man, identified as Hansaram Bhati, a Malad-based proprietor. The next afternoon, they found the body of the boy identified as Zohan Pathan.

Hansaram's son Tarun, who had held the hands of Natharam Chaudhry and his cousin, was rescued. Since then, he has been in a state of shock. "Tarun has got a fever and is constantly asking about his father," says Jongaram Bhati, 58, Hansaram's brother.

Zohan had come to Mumbai on vacation with his family from Goa. While his maternal aunt, his father, and his 10-month-old brother survived the accident, Zohan and his mother Shafina Pathan, 35, died in the accident.

Sitting outside the Indira Gandhi Hospital in Uran, his maternal aunt, Sonali Gonde, recalls the tragic turn of events. "My sister and her elder son went down to the lower deck looking for a life jacket. She informed me that no life jackets were left, so I asked her to come up. But when I looked down she was gone. All I had were her chappals in my hand. We had shopped for those in Colaba market before taking the ferry ride." Sonali says her sister died because there were not enough life jackets on the ferry.

While the owner of the ferry, Rajendra Padte, refuses to respond to questions, his brother, Shekhar, had only one thing to say; "The ferry was new. It was launched just a year ago."

Trials and tribulations

Locals and ferry owners demand to know why the Navy was conducting trials in an area that is extensively used by ferries. "For the last 3-4 years, the ferries have been tolerating all kinds of shenanigans by the Navy boats. They perform stunts and sometimes come very close to the ferry," claims a tourist guide, Trikal Patil.

Kavita, who sells caps at Elephanta Caves, echoes this allegation. She says, "In the last 5-6 years, we have seen altercations between people in the ferry and Navy personnel."

A Defence spokesperson dismissed these allegations. "This is not a joyride [for the Navy]. It is for the safety of the harbour. The nature of trials is to check extremities. These may seem like stunts but they may be part of trials."

The secretary of Jal Vahatuk Sahakari Sanstha, Iqbal Mukadam, points out that several oral and written complaints have been lodged with the Maharashtra Maritime Board and the Mumbai Port Authority about the movements of the Navy's speed boats. "We raised concerns regarding the speed limits of the speed boats and about possible accidents," he says. Minor collisions between ferry boats and Navy boats have been reported in the past, he adds.

In fact, on December 12, a few days before the accident, Jal Vahatuk Sahakari Sanstha had written a letter to the authorities about the "unauthorised speedboat berthing from jetty 1,2,3, and 4", instead of using "dedicated jetty 5". The letter also cited safety concerns and warned about the risk of accidents.

On December 19, given the mounting concerns about safety, especially after the accident, the Gateway of India is less crowded than usual. A man sitting at a ticket counter made out of tin sheets says, "Today, we have very few passengers."

The police have sprung into action and are busy counting passengers, checking life jackets, and the licences of ferries. A police officer, Jayesh Chavan, who has been stationed at the base of Elephanta Island, says, "This is a routine inspection. But due to the accident, we are being more careful than usual."

The survivors continue to deal with the trauma of the incident. Ishtiyak and Ariha, a newly married couple, had landed in Mumbai after their honeymoon in Kashmir. "They thankfully survived the accident," says the couple's uncle, Rafique Shriva. "But they are so distressed that they have decided to stay away from all water bodies, especially the sea."

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From Page One

Manmohan Singh's funeral to be held today

Earlier, the Union Cabinet observed a two-minute silence and adopted a Condolence Resolution. "Dr Manmohan Singh has left his imprint on our national life. In his passing away, the Nation has lost an eminent statesman, renowned economist and a distinguished leader," it said.

Mr. Modi described his predecessor's death as a big loss to the nation, asserting that his commitment to the people and the country's development would always be respected.

He recalled Dr. Singh's life journey after his family's migration to India, leaving behind everything following Partition. Dr. Singh's numerous achievements since then were no mean feat, Mr. Modi said.

The Congress's insistence on a memorial can also be seen as one to counter allegations that former Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao's cortege was not allowed inside the All India Congress Committee headquarters. Dr. Singh's body will be taken to the Congress headquarters for party workers and public to pay their respects before the official funeral takes place.

Dam won't affect India, Bangladesh, says China

She saidhydropower work on the river aimed to speed up development of clean energy and respond to climate change and hydrological disasters.

The dam will be built at a huge gorge in the Himalayan reaches where the Brahmaputra makes a huge U-turn to flow into Arunachal Pradesh and then to Bangladesh. The total investment in the dam could exceed $137 billion, which would dwarf any other single infrastructure project on the planet, including China's own Three Gorges Dam, which is regarded as the largest in the world, the Hong Kong-based *South China Morning Post* reported on Thursday.

China has already operationalised the $1.5 billion Zam Hydropower Station, the largest in Tibet in 2015.

SC gives Punjab a day to hospitalise farmer

The court directed both to be present online for the next hearing on Saturday.

"We have serious doubts about those farmers who are not concerned or aware about the danger to his (Dallewal) life. Why should they resist saving his life," Justice Kant asked. He said the State must deal with any law and order problem with an iron hand.

"Please take this very seriously. Somebody's life is at stake," Justice Dhulia intervened.

Mr. Singh suggested the Centre could pitch in and "defuse" the impasse with the farmers.

Letter to PM

He pointed out that States normally could request the Centre to step in. In fact, Mr. Dallewal had addressed a letter to the Prime Minister about meeting the farmers' demands.

"He (Dallewal) wants to make some headway for the farmers," the Advocate General conveyed.

However, Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta said the first priority for the State should be to save Mr. Dallewal's life.

Besides, he said the Centre's intervention now would only make the situation more complicated. "All this can be discussed. First, let him shift to a hospital," he said.

Mr. Mehta alleged that a "few people around Mr. Dallewal [were] keeping him hostage".

Justice Kant asked Mr. Singh to assure the farmer leader that he would get his day in court as soon as he recovered his health.

"You can assure Mr. Dallewal that the moment he is safe and sound from the health point of view, we will have him online and hear him. We will request the Solicitor-General to assist us in the matter. But please tell him that our primary concern today is his health," Justice Kant told Mr. Singh.

Household spending rose 3.5%: govt. survey

Reduced spending on edible oils offset spikes in wallet shares of items like vegetables over a period of generally high food inflation.

The urban-rural gap in MPCE has declined to 71% in 2022-23 from 84% in 2011-12, and dropped further to 70% in 2023-24, while the increase in the average MPCE in 2023-24 from the level of 2022-23 has been the maximum for the bottom 5% to 10% of India's population, for both rural and urban areas, the fact sheet said.

Consumption inequality declined

"Consumption inequality, both in rural and urban areas, has declined from the level of 2022-23. The Gini coefficient has declined to 0.237 in 2023-24 from 0.266 in 2022-23 for rural areas and to 0.284 in 2023-24 from 0.314 in 2022-23 for urban areas," the Ministry concluded.

The MPCE estimates from the latest survey are based on data collected from 2,61,953 households across all States and Union Territories, with about 59% of those households surveyed in rural India.

Indian visionary dedicated to regional peace: South Asia leaders on Manmohan

Leaders of neighbouring countries remember former Prime Minister; former Afghan President Karzai recalls the guidance offered by him, former Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe pays respects at his home; Pakistan's Deputy PM Ishaq Dar recalls his role in improving relations

Suhasini Haidar
NEW DELHI

Hamid Karzai greeting former Indian President Pranab Mukherjee and former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh at the Rashtrapati Bhavan during his visit to India in 2012. REUTERS

"Take steady steps and take your time", was the advice former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh gave Hamid Karzai, who became President of Afghanistan at the age of 45, when he first met him in 2004.

Speaking to *The Hindu* on Friday, Mr. Karzai said India and Afghanistan had the "best relations" during Dr. Singh's tenure, as India became Afghanistan's first Strategic Partner in 2012. "I was in a hurry, as a young President, and one day he told me – you can't build a nation in a hurry, you have to have patience for institutions to be built and human capital to develop," Mr. Karzai said, recalling Dr. Singh's famous speech on South Asian connectivity and a vision of being able to have "Breakfast in Amritsar, lunch in Lahore and dinner in Kabul".

As tributes poured in from around the world, many of the personal anecdotes came from leaders in India's neighbourhood, who remembered Dr. Singh for his particular interest in South Asian ties. On Friday, Maldivian President Mohamed Muizzu, Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake, Bangladesh Chief Executive Muhammad Yunus, Nepal Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli and Bhutan PM Tshering Tobgay were among those sitting heads of government and state that sent condolences.

"Dr. Singh's wisdom, compassion, and leadership touched many lives, and also strengthened the bond between our two countries," wrote Mr. Tobgay in a social media post, calling the former Prime Minister "a remarkable statesman and cherished friend of Bhutan".

"Nepal will forever remember his support for democracy and lasting friendship," wrote Mr. Oli, and said that Dr. Singh's "wisdom, humility, and dedication shaped India and inspired the region".

Mr. Yunus, a fellow economist, said Dr. Singh was responsible for India's "economic transformation", referring to the reforms of 1991. In a message released by the Chief Executive's office, Mr. Yunus spoke of Dr. Singh's role in promoting regional cooperation. "[Mr. Yunus] urged the South Asian countries to work together to build on the rich legacy of his ideas and work as a tribute to Dr. Manmohan Singh," said the statement, adding that after he won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2006, Dr. Singh had written to him, and Mr. Yunus was invited to address members of both Houses of Parliament at an annual parliamentary lecture.

Look East policy

"Dr. Singh's commitment to progress, and his leadership to strengthen the 'Look East Policy' played a pivotal role in fostering development and cooperation across the South Asia region," wrote Mr. Muizzu in a social media post, where he credited Dr. Singh's 2011 visit to the Maldives for the SAARC summit as a "significant milestone in advancing our economic and social development".

Praising Dr. Singh for his "humility and intellect", Mr. Dissanayake said he was "a tireless advocate of international collaboration," adding that he had "countless admirers worldwide", and influence that "transcended national boundaries".

Former Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe, who is in New Delhi at present, visited Dr. Singh's home and paid his respects to the former Prime Minister. In 1992, when they first met, Mr. Wickremesinghe was the Sri Lankan Industries Minister and Mr. Singh was Finance Minister, and both held deep discussions about liberalising their economies, and remained in contact years later.

"Dr. Singh was a distinguished economist and political leader," said Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar in a statement. "Beyond his remarkable achievements in the field of economics, Dr. Singh demonstrated a commitment to promoting regional peace," Mr. Dar said, adding that he had played a "notable role in improving Pakistan-India bilateral relations during his tenure as Prime Minister." Although India and Pakistan came close to a non-territorial resolution to the Kashmir dispute, the process was derailed after the 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks. Mr. Singh famously recited a couplet about the situation that said "mistakes were made in moments, for which the price was paid for ages".

Manmohan an outstanding statesman, says Putin; Anwar calls him 'my *mitra*, my *bhai*'

Kallol Bhattacherjee
NEW DELHI

Close ties: Manmohan Singh with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow in 2013. PTI

Leaders from across the world, including France, Russia, and Malaysia, expressed grief over the passing of former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and recollected their interactions with him.

Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim was one of the first to recall his personal exchanges with Dr. Singh as the Prime Minister of India.

Dr. Singh and Mr. Ibrahim both served as Finance Ministers during the 1990s when they collaborated extensively.

Subsequently, when he was imprisoned, Dr. Singh reached out to help his family. "Not many people know this, and it is time that I share it with Malaysians: during the years of my incarceration, he extended a kindness that he didn't have to - one that was neither politically expedient nor, as one can imagine, appreciated by the Malaysian government at that time. Yet, true to his character, he did it anyway. He offered scholarships for my children, particularly my son, Ihsan. Although I had declined the gracious offer, such a gesture undoubtedly showed his extraordinary humanity and generosity, demonstrative, as the Bard would have it, of a man so full of the 'milk of human kindness'," Mr. Ibrahim said in a social media post, describing Dr. Singh as "my *mitra*, my *bhai*".

Russian President Vladimir Putin described Dr. Singh as an "outstanding statesman".

"He also made a major personal contribution to strengthening friendly ties between our two countries by elevating them to the level of a special privileged strategic partnership," he said.

The Palestinian Embassy's Charge d'Affaires, Abed Elrazeg Abu Jazer, conveyed Palestine's tributes to Dr. Singh and shared a photo of the late PLO leader Yasser Arafat meeting Dr. Singh in New Delhi on January 21, 1992, when he was the Finance Minister. It was during the second tenure of Dr. Singh as Prime Minister that Palestine got its brand new embassy in Chanakyapuri.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, in a statement, described Dr. Singh as "one of the greatest champions of the U.S.-India strategic partnership" and gave him credit for laying the foundation for bilateral cooperation over the past two decades. "His leadership in advancing the U.S.-India Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement signified a major investment in the potential of the U.S.-India relationship," he said.

French President Emmanuel Macron said, "India has lost a great man and France a friend."

Chargesheet filed against Trinamool leader Partha

The Hindu Bureau
KOLKATA

The CBI on Friday filed a chargesheet against Trinamool Congress leader Partha Chatterjee in the school recruitment scam case. The development comes at a time when the Enforcement Directorate (ED) has started the process of framing charges in the recruitment scam.

In the chargesheet, the CBI has brought charges against two other persons Ayan Shil and Santu Gangopadhyay.

The process of framing charges against a total of 54 persons, including Mr. Chatterjee in the ED case related to irregularities in the primary teacher requirement is also going on.

Police set up outpost next to Sambhal Jama Masjid

The Hindu Bureau
LUCKNOW

A heavy police force was deployed on Friday at the site for a police post in front of the Shahi Jama Masjid in Sambhal district of Uttar Pradesh. Excavation was speeded up with the help of the municipality as the police want to complete the outpost construction soon.

"Measurements for the new outpost have been completed. The outpost is being established to bolster security in the region. The construction of the post will ensure a 24x7 presence of police in the area," said Additional Superintendent of Police (ASP) Shirish Chandra.

During the excavation for the construction of the post, a small bulldozer of the municipality went out of control and rammed a house on the road behind the mosque.

Gah village in Pakistan mourns its 'Mohna'

Press Trust of India
GAH (PAKISTAN)

Residents of former PM Manmohan Singh's ancestral village mourn his death at Gah village in Chakwal district of Pakistan. PTI

"The entire village is in mourning. We feel that someone from our family has died today," Altaf Hussain said as a group of local residents held a meeting to condole the death of village boy Manmohan who became Prime Minister next door.

Mr. Hussain is a teacher at the same school in Gah village where Dr. Manmohan Singh studied up to Class 4. His father Gurmukh Singh was a cloth merchant and his mother Amrat Kaur a homemaker. His friends called him 'Mohna'. The village lies about 100 km southwest of capital Islamabad and was part of Jhelum district when Dr. Singh was born.

Surrounded by lush green fields, the place can be reached from M-2 motorway linking Islamabad to Lahore, as well as from Chakwal city.

The former Prime Minister died at the AIIMS in New Delhi on Thursday night. He was 92.

Raja Ashiq Ali, nephew of Raja Muhammad Ali, a schoolmate who travelled to Delhi in 2008 to meet him, addressed the meeting. "All these villagers are deeply moved... They were eager to attend his last rites in India, but it is not possible. So, they are here to mourn," he said.

Dr. Singh's rise brought to spotlight his forgotten ancestral village. Some classmates who were around when he became Prime Minister in 2004 are dead now. But their families still live in Gah and cherish the old link. "We are still overwhelmed by the memory of the days when everyone in the village felt proud that a boy from our village had become the Prime Minister of India," Mr. Ashiq Ali said.

The iconic place in the village is the school where Dr. Singh got his early education. His admission number is 187, and the date of admission April 17, 1937. His date of birth is entered as February 4, 1932, his caste as 'Kohli'.

ED searches places linked to Chirag Paswan's associate

The Hindu Bureau
PATNA

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Friday carried out searches at three locations linked to Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) leader Hulas Pandey, a close associate of party president and Union Minister Chirag Paswan.

The Central agency conducted the searches in a case related to alleged disproportionate assets and sand mining. In Patna, the searches were conducted at Gola Road and Danapur. The third search was in Bengaluru.

Mr. Pandey, a former MLC, had resigned as the chairman of the LJP(RV) Parliamentary Board in December 2023, after his name appeared in the supplementary chargesheet filed by the CBI in the Brahmeshwar Mukhiya murder case in Bihar. Mukhiya was murdered on June 1, 2012, by unknown persons and the Central Bureau of Investigation had accused Mr. Pandey of plotting the murder. However, Mr. Pandey had termed it a political conspiracy.

Mukhiya was the founder of the private upper caste militia Ranveer Sena responsible for over two dozen caste massacres, killing many from Backward and Dalit communities. The CBI had alleged that Mr. Pandey feared "loss of his political clout" due to Mukhiya's growing popularity among "upper caste farmers" in the Shahabad region of Buxar, Bhojpur, Rohtas and other districts. Mr. Pandey was elected an MLC in 2010 from the Ara-Buxar seat on Janata Dal(U) ticket. However, he later switched to the LJP (RV).

In April, a special court dismissed the CBI chargesheet against Mr. Pandey.

Manmohan's work profoundly shaped India's destiny: Congress

CWC resolution says the former PM 'embodied the very best qualities of a true statesman, including compassion, honesty, and a deep commitment to public service'; in a message, Sonia mourns the loss of 'my friend, philosopher and guide'

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh was a true statesman whose "life and work have profoundly shaped the destiny of India", the Congress Working Committee (CWC) said in a resolution on Friday.

The highest decision-making body of the Congress held a special meeting to pass the resolution to honour the departed leader. Calling Dr. Singh a towering figure in India's political and economic landscape, the CWC resolution said his contributions transformed the country and earned him respect worldwide.

"Dr. Singh embodied the very best qualities of a true statesman – compassion, honesty, and a deep commitment to public service. His life was a living example of how grace and humility can coexist with great power," it noted.

Bidding adieu: Rahul Gandhi pays floral tribute to Manmohan Singh at the Congress headquarters in New Delhi on Friday. PTI

Endorsing his policies of "deregulation, privatisation, and the encouragement of foreign investment", the CWC noted that he had laid the foundation for India's rapid economic growth.

"As Finance Minister in the early 1990s, Dr. Singh was the architect of India's economic liberalisation. With unmatched foresight, he initiated a series of reforms that not only saved the nation from a balance-of-payments crisis but also opened the doors to global markets," the resolution said.

"Under his stewardship, India emerged as one of the world's fastest-growing economies, a testament to his brilliance and vision," it added.

The party listed out legislation such as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), Right to Education, National Food Security Act, Land Acquisition Act, Agricultural Debt Waiver and Debt Relief Scheme, the 93rd Constitutional Amendment to further social justice for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Classes, and the the Indo-U.S. civil nuclear deal as achievements of his 10-year-long tenure.

"As the 13th Prime Minister of India, Dr. Manmohan Singh led the country with a sense of calm determination and exceptional wisdom," the resolution said. "His tenure was marked by sustained economic growth, global recognition, and social progress."

The party acknowledged his role in shielding India from the worst effects of the global financial crisis in 2008 by taking strategic measures.

"Dr. Singh's dedication to inclusive growth, international diplomacy, and economic modernisation strengthened India's position in the global arena, while simultaneously focusing on the welfare of the common man. His legacy as a compassionate, reformist leader who prioritised stability and development will forever be etched in India's history," the CWC observed.

In a separate condolence message, Congress Parliamentary Party Chairperson Sonia Gandhi described the loss as a "personal one". "He was my friend, philosopher and guide. He was so gentle in his manner but so resolute in his deeply held convictions. His commitment to social justice, secularism and democratic values was deep and unwavering," Ms. Gandhi said.

Activists credit Manmohan for rights-based legislation, providing space for dialogue

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Under Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's 10-year tenure, several rights-based laws from the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act to the Right to Information and Forest Rights Acts were passed in Parliament. Activists remember the space for dialogue that Dr. Singh provided.

Former bureaucrat-turned-activist Aruna Roy told *The Hindu* that Dr. Singh was always willing to listen and gave space for dialogue and deliberation.

"He afforded easy access. One could go up to him and ask for time for an issue of importance. The views and opinions from advisory bodies, parliamentary committees and study groups in Planning Commission and elsewhere were taken into consideration for policy formulation, which is dramatically different from the present regime," Ms. Roy said.

The Tricolour flies half-mast at Parliament on Friday to mourn former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. AFP

She explained that even in case he had differences with the position the civil society or the National Advisory Council (NAC) took, he heard them out. "We had our share of differences. For example, we wanted a stricter penalty clause in RTI but he argued that already the legislation is a great leap for the bureaucracy from impunity to transparency. So, we did have the penalty clause but not as stringent as we wanted," Ms. Roy said.

The country's first Chief Information Commissioner, Wajahat Habibullah, said Dr. Singh was "a little uncertain" about the impact of RTI on the government's functioning. "He was a true bureaucrat who understood the importance of secrecy in the government. So, he was a little apprehensive, but he was committed to the idea of accountability and transparency," he said.

(With PTI inputs)

Manmohan was humility personified; criticism did not deter him: T.K.A. Nair

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh was humility personified and had a genuine respect for the people whom he met, recalls T.K.A. Nair, who was Principal Secretary to Dr. Singh when he was the Prime Minister.

"He never sought to project himself as the architect of any remarkable achievement, and as a democrat to the core, warned us in the Prime Minister's Office against such a portrayal," Mr. Nair told *The Hindu* on Friday.

"Criticism, however ruthless and uncharitable, did not deter him from pursuing what he thought was good for the country. During the first United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government, he was fully aware of the fact that he was not an elected Prime Minister. He knew his limitations, but UPA-1 was a crowning success. Many of the programmes today were begun by him. Undoubtedly, his greatest challenge was inking the Indo-U.S. nuclear deal, which faced strong headwinds. The Ministry's future was at stake, but he was undaunted by criticism as he strongly believed that the deal was good for the country. The interests of the country remained uppermost for him," said Mr. Nair.

T.K.A. Nair with Manmohan Singh. FILE PHOTO

To a question on Dr. Singh's PMO being mocked as a "Mallu Club" for featuring many Malayali officers, Mr. Nair said Dr. Singh was aware of this.

"'It was not by design,' I told him. It just so happened that many senior officers across departments were brought in based on their performance and seniority," he said.

Former PM adopted policies that he believed were in India's interest: CPI(M)

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Mourning former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, the Communist Party of India (Marxist), which had withdrawn support to the first United Progressive Alliance government led by him over the India-U.S. civil nuclear deal, said on Friday that he was a leader of "unquestioned integrity".

At the same time taking a nuanced stand, the CPI (M) Polit Bureau said in a statement in New Delhi that Dr. Singh "adopted policies which he believed were in the interests of the country", hinting at the inflection point between the two outfits which led to the eventual disassociation in July 2008.

Conveying their condolences to his wife, Gursharan Kaur, and daughters, the statement said, "Dr. Manmohan Singh during his ten-year tenure as Prime Minister stood firmly for secular and democratic values."

Sitaram Yechury with Manmohan Singh. FILE PHOTO

Polit Bureau coordinator Prakash Karat, who was closely involved in the 2008 talks before the CPI (M) and the Congress split paths over the nuclear deal, said there were points of convergence too. "There were areas of convergence on many policies, like rural employment guarantee, right to information, forest rights and so on, which were part of the common minimum programme of the UPA," he said. He said the CPI(M)'s opposition to the nuclear deal went beyond the deal itself. "What we were opposed to was India becoming a strategic ally to the U.S. But it was former PM Singh's conviction that it was the right path for the country to follow. We had frank exchange of views but couldn't reconcile our differences," he said.

Counting the former PM as one of the "finest leaders" he has known, CPI general secretary D. Raja said his "humility and politeness in both personal and public life were unmatched and these qualities shone even in the most challenging of times". Mr. Raja said that Dr. Singh's leadership and the Left's collaboration during the first UPA government proved to be transformative. Monumental decisions such as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, and the Right to Information Act were taken during that administration.

"Dr. Singh had deep respect for democratic values. Despite ideological and policy disagreements, he maintained a spirit of decency, civility and fairness. His ability to engage with diverse views, his willingness to listen, and his unwavering commitment to the principles of democracy made him a statesman who earned the respect of all, regardless of political affiliation," Mr. Raja said.

Manmohan was pragmatic on Kashmir: J&K leaders

The Hindu Bureau
SRINAGAR

Jammu and Kashmir leaders on Friday paid tributes to former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, and praised his handling of the Kashmir issue through multiple dialogue processes as "pragmatic and considerate".

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah recalled Dr. Singh's "deep concern for the development of J&K". He said Dr. Singh will also be remembered for fostering peace and development in J&K. National Conference president Farooq Abdullah recalled Dr. Singh's efforts to bring Kashmiri Pandits back to J&K.

Peoples Democratic Party president Mehbooba Mufti held a special commemoration ceremony in Srinagar.

Hurriyat chairman Mirwaiz also expressed sadness over his demise.

'History will count Dr. Singh as a founding father of modern India'

Praveen Chakravarty
Chairman, All India Professionals' Congress

His life story is about how in the desert of political cynicism there can be a flowing oasis

Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's life reads like the ultimate dream. Rising from humble beginnings to a glittering resume replete with degrees from the world's best universities, positions of the highest office in public life, global fame and repute, and feted with every coveted award.

A tribute to his legacy would inevitably include a long list of the positions of power and responsibilities he held and his stunning professional accomplishments. In the modern meritocratic era of credentials and positions, his dazzling array of achievements would be Dr. Singh's (as I called him) defining legacy.

But in my view, his defining legacy is to illuminate a virtuous path to extraordinary success in the harsh and treacherous terrain of politics and public service. His whole life is a standout exception to the belief that one has to necessarily sacrifice principles of probity, integrity, sincerity, loyalty, and humility to succeed in politics. His true legacy is about what he was not - the typically duplicitous, virtueless, self-obsessed political leader that is successful. His enormously successful pursuit of the politics of purpose and principles offers tantalising hope and inspiration to millions of idealistic youth to enter public life and dedicate themselves to nation-building. This is perhaps the legacy that Dr. Singh himself would have been proud to leave behind for the nation that he loved so dearly.

I am very fortunate to have been the recipient of Dr. Singh's fondness for well over a decade. Over the past few years, as Dr. Singh became physically weaker, rendering him unable to venture much outside, his graceful wife, Gursharan Kaur, would tell me to visit regularly and "engage him intellectually". I visited him nearly every month for the past five years and interacted with him closely, including writing some articles for this paper. During these interactions, I learned copiously from and about him. I am shattered that it is now time to write his obituary and distraught that I am stuck outside India, unable to bid my last goodbye to him.

Perennial nation-builder

Even in the private confines of his living room, Dr. Singh was scrupulously polite, warm, thoughtful, and modest. He may have been the wise sage to the external world but his curiosity for new information and learning was boundless. In the long years that I have known him closely, not once was there a semblance of even an intent to lecture or sermonise from a bully pulpit, a trait that typically plagues most accomplished people. I watched with amazement on the day after demonetisation in 2016, how despite being a former Prime Minister, Finance Minister, and RBI Governor, he sought information from junior RBI officers to senior former Ministers and only after that he formed his opinion on the move. He was so deeply concerned about its deleterious impact on the poor that he felt he owed it to the people to warn the government, through an uncharacteristically strong speech in Parliament and an article in this paper, which then set the tone for the nation's response and actions. This was quintessential Dr. Singh – the unflinching patriot, the humble knowledge seeker, the thoughtful opinion maker, the constant guardian of people's welfare, and the perennial nation-builder.

Dr. Singh's devotion to his duty was simply mind-boggling. In the past two years, when his health was frail and he was wheelchair-bound, he still insisted on being taken to the Congress party office to cast his vote in the Congress presidential election in 2022 and in the next year, to Parliament to fulfil his duties as an MP to cast a vote on behalf of the Opposition, both of which were neither crucial nor compulsory.

History will rightfully count Dr. Singh as a founding father of modern India. He acutely understood that building a nation like ours, with its enormous complexities and contradictions, is necessarily a political project of consensus-building on a foundation of strong institutions. His inclusive growth paradigm of economic development and a rights-based social welfare framework continue to be the twin pillars of India's governance model regardless of which government is in power.

'Be attached to purpose'

At the same time, Dr. Singh had a Keynesian philosophy to changing his mind when presented with new credible information. When I met him last in October, he discussed the shifting political landscape in many nations caused by free trade and its attendant impact on people and seemed open to changing his previous doctrinaire position on the benefits of free trade. It takes the sagacity, curiosity, and humility of someone like Dr. Singh to yearn for new information, process it, and alter their views, in the twilight of their hugely successful life.

Dr. Singh's greatest challenge was navigating the mines of India's and the Congress party's politics. But he believed strongly in the medium of politics for nation-building, however harsh and rough it may be. While his contributions to governance and policy are both legendary and highly lauded, it was his outlook on politics that was the most endearing to me. There have been reams written about the 1991 economic reforms that he championed as India's Finance Minister and the enormous foreign policy successes that he achieved as Prime Minister. But as he often said, those were possible only because he had his resignation letter handy, ready to sacrifice power if the cause was not right. He was able to effect dramatic turns in India's governance landscape, not only due to his intellectual heft but also through the power of his integrity and righteousness. "Be detached to power and attached to purpose," he would often tell me.

Dr. Singh will surely fill many chapters of history books in India and the world. There will be abundant information on his governance achievements and the course of the nation under his stewardship. But the true legacy of Dr. Singh, as he may have preferred, would be to inspire and motivate young people to enter public life and uphold the highest ideals in service to the nation. His life story is about how in the desert of political cynicism there can be a flowing oasis. That it is possible to uphold the highest principles and still succeed in public life. At a time when devious, demagogic politics is hailed as 'Chanakyan', when the pursuit of power has supplanted all decency and decorum in public life, when showmanship trumps workmanship, one wonders if the era of the politics of sincerity, humility, integrity, and service will also end with Dr. Manmohan Singh's passing. I pray not, and so will Dr. Singh.

INBRIEF

Jaishankar meets NSA Sullivan at White House

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar met National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan at the White House during which both the leaders had a wide-ranging discussion on the progress of India-U.S. strategic partnership. Mr. Jaishankar is currently on an official visit to the U.S. during which he is scheduled to meet his U.S. counterpart, Antony Blinken, and other senior members of the outgoing administration. He will also chair a conference of the Consuls-General of India in the U.S. PTI

Odisha govt. identifies over 40 lakh ghost beneficiaries

Over 40 lakh ghost beneficiaries of the public distribution system have been detected in Odisha during the current e-KYC verification, the Mohan Majhi government said on Friday. Speaking to presspersons, Food Supplies and Consumer Welfare Minister Krushna Chandra Patra said on average, 1 lakh to 1.5 lakh ghost beneficiaries were found in every district in the verification process, which was yet to be complete. The Minister said diversion of resources through ghost beneficiaries would be done away with.

'22% rise in enrolment after smart classroom initiative'

The initiative has improved learning experiences and attendance of students besides resulting in improved comfort of teachers and preference for smart classroom facilities, says an IIM study

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Introduction of smart classrooms under the Smart Cities Mission (SCM) has led to a 22% increase in overall enrolment as per data reported by 19 cities between 2015-16 and 2023-24, says a study by the Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore.

The national-level study said that 71 cities have developed 9,433 smart classrooms in 2,398 government schools. The highest number of smart classroom projects are in Karnataka (80), followed by Rajasthan (53). Tamil Nadu has 23 and Delhi 12. West Bengal, with just two, is among the States at the bottom of the table.

According to the report, teachers generally agree with the idea that the smart classroom initiative is improving learning experiences and attendance of students across select smart cities of the country.

The study says that 71 cities have developed 9,433 smart classrooms in 2,398 government schools. FILE PHOTO

Special training provided to teachers improved their comfort and preference for using smart classroom facilities, with senior secondary teachers showing the highest comfort levels, as compared with others.

Apart from this, 41 cities have developed digital libraries with a total of 7,809 seat, it said, highlighting the significant impact of digital libraries in cities such as Raipur in Chhattisgarh and Tumakuru in Karnataka by providing essential educational resources and supporting students in preparations of competitive exam.

The Smart Cities Mission (SCM) was launched by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs in June 2015. The objective of the Mission is to promote cities that provide core infrastructure and give a decent quality of life to its citizens – a clean and sustainable environment and application of 'smart' solutions.

As on November 2024, 91% of the projects under SCM have been completed, according to the Ministry.

The mission launched a platform in 2022, named 'SAAR' (Smart Cities and Academia towards Action and Research), to bring together the academia and government to document and research new urban initiatives.

Under the SAAR initiative, the Smart Cities Mission has initiated 50 impact assessment research studies as "Sameeksha Series".

Twenty nine premier institutions of India have undertaken these 50 impact assessment studies, which include six Indian Institutes of Management, eight Indian Institutes of Technology, three Schools of Planning and Architecture and 12 specialised research institutes.

The Hindu Margazhi Music Contest is now open for entries

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Entries are invited for *The Hindu* Margazhi Music Contest, 2025 from classical musicians aged under 40 to celebrate the Margazhi season, a tribute to the vibrant traditions of India's musical heritage.

Video recordings by Carnatic and Hindustani practitioners can be sent under various categories: children (below 12 years of age), juniors (13-19), and seniors (20-40). The recording should be under five minutes.

The entries must contain the name of the composition, the composer, and *ragam* and *thalam* for both Carnatic and Hindustani pieces. Only one five-minute entry will be permitted per participant.

Entries can be uploaded at newsth.live/MMC2024PA or by scanning the QR code given below. Audio entries will not be accepted. The last date for submission is January 5, 2025. The winners will be chosen by a panel of eminent judges.

THE HINDU
Margazhi Music Contest

Video recordings by classical musicians should be uploaded by January 5

The contest offers a unique platform for artists – from emerging talent to seasoned performers – to showcase their skills and connect with the timeless magic of Margazhi. Indian Oil is the associate sponsor for the contest.

Exciting prizes await outstanding performers.

IIT-Bombay team makes needle-free 'shock syringe' for painless injections

Purnima Sah
MUMBAI

In a welcome move for patients who have a fear of needles, a team of researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay, has developed a needle-free "shock syringe".

The study, led by Professor Viren Menezes from the Department of Aerospace Engineering, was published in the *Journal of Biomedical Materials and Devices*.

The development of a shock syringe could make immunisation drives more efficient for everyone. FILE PHOTO

The researchers tested the effectiveness of drug delivery by a shock syringe on laboratory rats. "Unlike syringes with needles, the shock syringe does not rely on piercing the skin with a sharp tip. Instead, it uses high-energy pressure waves (shock waves) that can travel faster than the speed of sound to pierce the skin. These waves, when generated, compress the surrounding medium, such as air or liquid, through which they travel. A similar effect happens during a sonic boom; when an aircraft flies faster than the speed of sound, it creates shock waves that push and disturb the air," Professor Menezes said.

Working mechanism

The shock syringe, developed in 2021 in Professor Menezes's laboratory, is slightly longer than a regular ballpoint pen. The device has a micro shock tube consisting of three sections: the driver, driven, and drug holder, which work together to create the shockwave-driven microjet for drug delivery.

Pressurised nitrogen gas is applied to the shock syringe that is the driver section of the micro shock tube part; it is filled with liquid drugs to create a microjet of the drug. The microjet travels at a speed nearly twice as fast as a commercial aeroplane at take-off. This jet stream of drug passes through the nozzle of the syringe before penetrating the skin. The entire process of delivering drugs using a shock syringe is rapid and gentle; most patients wouldn't feel a thing, he said.

Priyanka Hankare, lead author of the study, said, "The shock syringe is designed to deliver medication rapidly... To minimise tissue damage and ensure consistent and precise drug delivery, the pressure in the shock syringe is continuously monitored and rigorous testing on tissue simulants (such as synthetic skin) helps to calibrate the force and speed of jet insertion, ensuring safety and comfort."

"The development of a shock syringe promises more than pain-free injections. It could make immunisation drives quicker and more efficient for both children and adults. It could prevent the occurrence of blood-borne diseases caused by needle-stick injuries due to mishandling or improper disposal. Shock syringes are designed to perform multiple drug delivery shots (example, over 1,000 shots tested), offering reliability and cost-effectiveness over time at the expense of nozzle replacement," Ms. Hankare said.

Bengal Forest Department deploys new 'torch' teams to trap elusive tiger Zeenat

The Hindu Bureau
KOLKATA

The West Bengal Forest Department has set up four teams with *Hula* (torch) party members to trace Zeenat, a female tiger, in Purulia district as the three-year-old big cat has been elusive for more than two weeks. The tiger had escaped from the Similipal Reserve Forest in Odisha on December 10.

The *Hula* party workers are generally used by the department to drive out elephants from human habitats.

The tiger, which had stayed in the Bandwan area of Purulia district for five days, has now moved to the Dangardi forests in Manbazar. According to forest officials, they have set up traps in multiple locations to capture the big cat. They are also using drones with thermal imagery, goats as baits, night vision equipment, monitoring teams, and more to capture the tiger or drive her out through the same route she came in.

Till now, Zeenat has managed to kill three domestic goats, spreading fear among residents in the area. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Till now, Zeenat has managed to kill three goats, spreading fear among residents in the area. Forest officials have also put up fencing in multiple places where there is human habitation to reduce the chances of conflict with the tiger.

The department held a meeting on Thursday and made a new strategy to capture the tiger. They have made four teams, which include the *hula* party members. The teams have been equipped with radio trackers, tranquillisers, cages, and traps. These teams will fan out across Purulia's mountains and forest areas to help with the operation.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, Debal Roy, Chief Wildlife Warden, said, "She may have been captured with traps and baits before so she knows what it is like, that may be the reason why she is avoiding all traps, and knows the pattern."

Aviation body suspends two top officials at Akasa Air

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on Friday suspended Akasa Air's head of operations and head of training for six months each for lapses in training.

In an order, the DGCA wrote, "Director Training of M/s SNV Aviation private Limited (Akasa Air) dated 30th October 2024 has been examined and was found unsatisfactory." It said that the Director of Operations, Captain Floyd Gracious, and Director of Training, Neeraj Bhatia, were being suspended for six months.

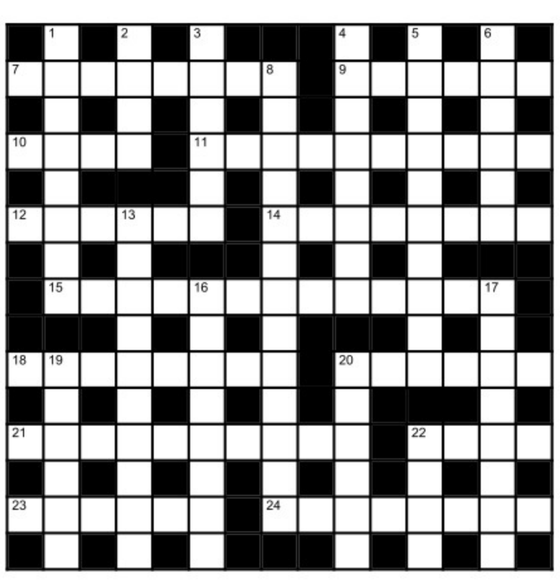
This action follows a regulatory audit in October. The DGCA audit had found that pilots were being trained navigation approaches on a simulator which was not certified for the procedure. The DGCA said this was in violation of its rule and issued a show cause notice to the airline, but found the airline's response to be unsatisfactory.

TH CROSSWORD + 14368

(set by Hypatia)

To solve this puzzle online, get across to our crossword site. @ https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

7 Covers alien in space shuttle initially (8)
9 Contests in online outlets (6)
10 Won after revolutionary champ (4)
11 Just bore a son - a blessing to cherish (10)
12 New users supply tenders (6)
14 Hobby of emperor collecting money over time (8)
15 An expert presses it (4,9)
18 Wish horse crosses entire ground (8)
20 Correspondence from landlord (6)
21 Harry Potter coin in custody (10)
22 Complaint of boy reversing charge (4)
23 Jostles below funny bones, eventually (6)
24 Lift through real votes mostly rigged (8)

Down

1 Notwithstanding a husband parting, strong lady moves ahead (8)
2 Second present's white (4)
3 Noblemen backing president? Maybe, they're cultured (6)
4 Reminiscences of viral images featuring Boris in the centre (8)
5 Doctor, male attender tackling pressure in section (10)
6 Criminal lost near leaderless hideout acquired illegally (6)
8 Likes prawn and gin cocktail drink (9,4)
13 Genius got puzzles accepting small hint (10)
16 Per Spooner, evil media got Diana, say (8)
17 Essentially asked to reveal blueprint (8)
19 Seldom undercooked meat's gutted liberally (6)
20 Pined and attacked having love for you, eventually (6)
22 Bill and Bob made USA think ultimately (4)

SUDOKU

	4			2		5		
2								1
		7		8	4			3
8						6		
		6	7		3	9		
		3						5
7			4	3		1		
9								6
		5		6			8	

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DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★☆☆

Solution to previous puzzle

G	U	E	S	S	W	H	O	
A		A		T		A		C
S	I	G	N	O	R	I		L
B		L		R		R		A
A	B	E	A	M		S	O	U
G		T		D		T		S
			N	O	M	A	T	T
I		Z		O		N		R
M	A	I	T	R	E	D	H	O
P		M				O		P
L	A	B	Y	R	I	N	T	H
O		A		A		E		O
R	U	B	I	C	O	N		B
E		W		E		D		I
S	I	E	R	R	A		M	A

P	O	P	S	U	P			
	P		T		A			
L	A	T	E	R	A	L		
	E		A		M			
U	N	D	B	I	T	E		
	S			G		T		
W	H	A	T					
	E		T		O			
H	O	T	E	L				
	X		B		H			
	A	L	A	T	E			
	M		N		R			
	B	R	I	N	G	U	P	
	I		N		O		E	
M	A	K	E	O	N	E	S	

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

4	3	1	2	9	5	6	8	7
5	6	2	7	4	8	9	3	1
7	9	8	6	3	1	4	2	5
2	7	3	9	8	6	1	5	4
1	8	5	4	7	2	3	9	6
9	4	6	5	1	3	8	7	2
6	5	4	8	2	9	7	1	3
3	2	9	1	6	7	5	4	8
8	1	7	3	5	4	2	6	9

FAITH

The power of chanting

People celebrate birthdays with friends and relatives, who exchange felicity through gifts and presents. The hosts also reciprocate by giving return gifts. But when we celebrate the days of the various manifestations of God, also known as "Jayanthi", God expects us to pay our obeisance in the form of devotion, and in return, He showers His blessings.

Sri Kesava Vajapeya Swamy said in a discourse that Sri Hanuman is the manifestation of Lord Rudra. The most valuable gifts that Hanuman expect are the reciting of Sri Ramayana and chanting of Sri Rama Nama. As a token of appreciation, Hanuman extends his blessings by enriching our knowledge, valour, name, and fame, and making us fearless and disease-free (*Buddhir Balam*). He shows compassion and showers all these without any delay.

Arjuna asked Lord Krishna about His greatness and powers. The Lord replied that He could not fully describe them, though He is omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent. The Lord mentions several unique attributes He is fond of, one of which is that of all the 12 Tamil months, He likes the month of "Margazhi" the most. In that sacred month, on a new moon day with the star "Moolam", Sri Hanuman manifested in this world with the sole aim of rendering service to Sri Rama. When Lord Rama decided to leave this world and go to the realm of His abode, He asked all to accompany Him to Sri Vaikunta. But Hanuman declined and said he wanted to remain on earth to listen to the recitation of the *Ramayana* and the chanting of Sri Rama Nama by people. It is believed that Hanuman will be present wherever these take place.

INBRIEF

UltraTech to buy 8.69% stake in Star Cement for ₹851 crore

UltraTech Cement said it would acquire 8.69% minority stake from the promoters of Meghalaya-based Star Cement in a deal worth ₹851 crore, further intensifying competition with Adani group entity, Ambuja Cements. The development comes three days after the Aditya Birla group firm completed the acquisition of a controlling stake in India Cements Ltd., turning the south-based firm into its subsidiary. UltraTech is expanding its capacity through acquisitions. PTI

UPI transactions via PPIs on 3rd party apps gets RBI nod

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has decided to allow prepaid instrument holders (PPIs) to make/receive UPI payments through third-party mobile applications. "This will enable PPI holders to make and receive UPI payments through the mobile application of third-party UPI applications," the RBI said. The RBI's decision is aimed at providing more flexibility to holders of PPIs such as gift cards, metro rail cards and digital wallets, among others.

SaaS fintech Zaggle Prepaid raises ₹595 crore via QIP

B2B software-as-a-service (SaaS) fintech Zaggle Prepaid Ocean Services raised ₹595 crore via qualified institutional placement (QIP) route and was eyeing at least two acquisitions in the next 12 months. "The company is evaluating five to six potential targets in the SaaS fintech space, including areas such as merchant card software, accounts receivables and FASTag solutions," Raj Narayanam, founder & executive chairman, Zaggle Prepaid Ocean Services Limited, said.

Rupee Rattle: Currency hits fresh record low of 85.48/$

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee opened weak at 85.31 and plunged 53 paise to the lowest-ever intraday level of 85.80 amid record demand from importers, and FII outflows

Press Trust of India
MUMBAI

The rupee on Friday registered the steepest fall in almost two years to hit its lifetime intraday low of 85.80 before a suspected RBI's intervention helped recover some of its losses and settled 21 paise lower at a record low of 85.48 against the U.S. dollar on a strong greenback amid higher month-end demand from banks and importers.

According to analysts, the Reserve Bank's stance to hold on to its dollar payments in short-term forward contracts added to the shortage of greenback, with importers rushing to meet their month-end payment obligations.

Tight-fisted: The RBI's stance to hold on to dollar payments in short-term forward contracts added to greenback shortage. REUTERS

Despite robust sentiment in domestic equity markets, the rupee was weighed down by sustained outflow of foreign funds and rising crude oil prices, they added. At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened weak at 85.31 and plunged 53 paise to the lowest-ever intraday level of 85.80.

Rising U.S. bond yields that raised the dollar's attractiveness spurred the ₹ dip, said Ajit Mishra, senior vice president of research at Religare Broking.

Osamu Suzuki

Osamu Suzuki, who led the Japanese auto firm into India, dies at 94

Reuters
TOKYO

Osamu Suzuki, an ingenious pennypincher who led Japan's Suzuki Motor for more than four decades and played a key role in turning India into a flourishing auto market, has died aged 94.

He died on Christmas Day of lymphoma, said the firm, which he steered ambitiously, during his time as either CEO or chairman, out of its primary market of mini vehicles.

The inexpensive, boxy, 660-cc cars specific to Japan benefited from generous tax breaks, but demanded a stringent reining-in of costs that proved to be a key part of the automaker's DNA.

Even so, Mr. Suzuki's thriftiness was legendary: he would order factory ceilings lowered to save on air-conditioning and fly economy class.

"Forever," or "until the day I die," were signature humorous responses with which he parried queries about how long he would stay at the company.

JSW Energy to buy O2 Power's units for $1.47 bn

Reuters

Indian billionaire Sajjan Jindal-led JSW Energy said on Friday its JSW Neo Energy unit will acquire renewable energy (RE) platform O2 Power's subsidiaries in a deal worth $1.47 billion.

The acquisition aligns with JSW Energy's target of achieving 20 GW renewable-led capacity before fiscal 2030 amid a strong government push for higher clean energy capacity. JSW Energy will buy 4.7 GW RE from O2 Power, backed by Singapore-owned Temasek and EQT Infrastructure.

Current account deficit eased in Q2 but may double in Q3

Lalatendu Mishra
MUMBAI

India's current account deficit (CAD) for the July-September period, or Q2 of 2024-25, moderated marginally to $11.2 billion or 1.2% of GDP from $11.3 billion or 1.3% of GDP a year ago.

As per preliminary balance of payments (BoP) data released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Friday, the merchandise trade deficit increased to $75.3 billion from $64.5 billion in Q2 of 2023-24, while net services receipts rose to $44.5 billion from $39.9 billion a year ago.

"Services exports have risen on a year-on-year basis across major categories such as computer services, business services, travel services and transportation services," the RBI said.

In the financial account, net foreign direct investment (FDI) recorded an outflow of $2.2 billion in Q2 relative to a $0.8 billion outflow a year ago in the same period last year.

"India's CAD came in well below our expectation for Q2, providing some solace in light of the sharp weakening in the Rupee seen recently," remarked Aditi Nayar, chief economist at ICRA.

"Looking ahead, the initial estimate of a record-high trade deficit in November could well bloat the current account deficit to 2.5%-2.7% of GDP in the current quarter. For 2024-25 as a whole, the deficit may print around 1.1%-1.2% of GDP," she reckoned.

Net inflows from foreign portfolio investments rose to $19.9 billion from $4.9 billion a year ago. There was an $18.6 billion accretion to foreign exchange reserves (on a BoP basis) compared to just $2.5 billion a year ago. Net Q2 inflows from external commercial borrowings stood at $5 billion against a $1.9 billion outflow last year.

MARKETS

MARKET WATCH

	FRIDAY	% CHANGE
Sensex	78,699	0.29
US Dollar	85.48	-0.25
Gold	79,200	0.44
Brent oil	73.92	0.49

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Enter	2409.95	9.70
Adani Ports	1230.70	-13.25
Apollo Hosp	7246.30	-14.85
Asian Paints	2271.40	9.00
Axis Bank	1077.45	0.75
Bajaj Auto	8928.30	49.80
Bajaj Finserv	1579.30	20.00
Bajaj Finance	6907.75	92.00
Bharat Elec	292.05	-3.15
Bharti Airtel	1599.85	0.35
BPCL	293.55	-2.05
Britannia Ind	4769.30	7.65
Cipla	1506.60	16.05
Coal India	380.50	-6.10
Dr Reddys Lab	1389.45	34.30
Eicher Motors	4876.90	75.55
Grasim Ind	2480.30	-1.75
HCL Tech	1892.00	-8.75
HDFC Bank	1798.25	7.50
HDFC Life	621.90	-4.50
Hero MotoCorp	4237.95	-37.05
Hindalco	617.40	-11.35
Hind Unilever	2341.25	8.50
ICICI Bank	1307.55	10.20
IndusInd Bank	953.40	21.45
Infosys	1916.75	9.35
ITC	478.60	1.65
JSW Steel	913.30	-1.15
Kotak Bank	1759.90	7.10
L&T	3608.10	-21.40
M&M	3049.45	73.80
Maruti Suzuki	10941.05	45.05
NestleIndia	2165.60	15.70
NTPC	335.00	0.35
ONGC	236.90	-3.35
PowerGrid Corp	309.40	-0.90
Reliance Ind	1221.05	4.50
SBI Life	1405.30	-3.75
State Bank	799.65	-12.80
Shriram Finance Ltd.	2898.90	-28.00
Sun Pharma	1861.25	19.90
TataConsumerProduct	907.95	7.00
Tata Motors	750.50	9.70
Tata Steel	138.91	-1.45
TCS	4164.85	-4.25
Tech Mahindra	1711.65	12.95
Titan	3309.20	-13.85
Trent Ltd.	7118.30	54.60
UltraTech Cement	11406.55	-54.10
Wipro	309.10	4.05

EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on December 27

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	85.33	85.65
Euro	88.94	89.28
British Pound	106.96	107.37
Japanese Yen (100)	54.09	54.30
Chinese Yuan	11.69	11.74
Swiss Franc	94.74	95.10
Singapore Dollar	62.76	63.01
Canadian Dollar	59.24	59.47
Malaysian Ringitt	19.07	19.17
Australian Dollar	53.00	53.21

Source:Indian Bank

The West Bengal Power Development Corporation Limited
(A Govt. of West Bengal Enterprise)
Corporate Identity No. U40104WB1985SGC039154
Registered & Corporate Office : Bidyut Unnayan Bhaban
Plot No.: 3/C, LA - Block, Sector- III, Bidhannagar, Kol-700106

Notice regarding Expressions of Interest (EOI)

Ref. No.: WBPDCL / Tend-Adv/24-25/CORP./CC-2894 Dated: 24.12.2024
EOI No.: WBPDCL /CORP/M&C/S-996 (MMC)/EOI/2024-25/2218 Dated : 20.12.2024
Selection of Mine Developer cum Operator (MDO) for Deocha-Pachami-Dewanganj-Harinsingha Coal Block allotted to the WBPDCL.
EOI Start Date / EOI End Date: 20.12.2024 from 15:00 hrs. / 03.02.2025 at 17:00 hrs.
Contact Person: Ipsita Chaudhuri, Senior Manager (M&C). Contact No.: 9830616477.
E-mail : ichaudhuri@wbpdcl.co.in For details please visit: https://wbpdcl.co.in/ https://wbtenders.gov.in
ICA- T24093(3)/2024

कार्यालय अति मुख्य अभियन्ता, जन स्वास्थ्य अभियांत्रिकी विभाग, क्षेत्र पाली
E-Mail address:-addlchiefengineerpali@gmail.com,ACEPHEDPALI@RAJASTHAN.GOV.IN
क्रमांक अमुअ / जन स्वा. / क्षेत्र पाली / त.स. / 24–25 /
बिड संशोधन सूचना, NIB संख्या 01/2024-25
इस कार्यालय द्वारा जारी की गई निविदा संख्या 01 / 2024–25 में आंशिक संशोधन होने के कारण बिड सशोधन जारी किया जा कर https://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in एवं https://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in पर अपलोड किया गया।
निविदा संख्या 01 / 2024–25 (UBN No- PHE2425WLOB07274)
(जगदीश चन्द व्यास)
अतिरिक्त मुख्य अभियन्ता
जन स्वा. अभि. विभाग
क्षेत्र पाली
DIPR/C/13498/2024

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NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Tender No.	Work Description	Due date
242513 005322	Battery Operated Forklift (3T) with Paper Roll Clamp	17.01.2025

Corrigendum if any will be issued in TNPL Website & NIC Portal only. Detailed Terms & conditions, tender fee, EMD etc., are available in the tender document which can be downloaded from websites : www.tnpl.com / https://tntenders.gov.in/nicgep/app
DIPR/5657/Tender/2024 *TNPL - Maker of bagasse based eco-friendly Paper*

कार्यालय अधीक्षण अभियन्ता सार्वजनिक निर्माण विभाग वृत डूंगरपुर
क्रमांक : टी.एस./निविदा फाईल/2024-25/डी-2237 दिनांक: 17.12.2024
निविदा सूचना संख्या - 09/2024-25
राजस्थान के राज्यपाल महोदय की ओर से विभिन्न सड़क व पुल निर्माण कार्यों मय पांच वर्ष की मरम्मत एवं संधारण की अवधि लिए उपयुक्त श्रेणी में सार्वजनिक निर्माण विभाग राजस्थान में पंजीकृत संवेदकों एवं राज्य सरकार/ केन्द्र सरकार के अधिकृत संगठनों/ केन्द्रीय लोक निर्माण विभाग/ डाक एवं दूर संचार विभाग/ रेलवे इत्यादि में पंजीकृत संवेदकों, जो कि राजस्थान सरकार के उपयुक्त श्रेणी के संवेदकों के समकक्ष हो, से कार्यों हेतु ई-टेन्डरिंग के माध्यम से निर्धारित प्रपत्र में कुल 02 सड़क निर्माण कार्य जिनकी कुल लागत राशि रु. 345.33 लाख है, प्राप्त की जावेगी। निविदा से संबंधित विवरण वेबसाईट http://dipr.rajasthan.gov.in व http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in व http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in पर देखा जा सकता है।
कार्यवार यूबीएन संख्या निम्नानुसार है:-

NIB Code No.:		PWD2425A3365
UBN No.:	1.	PWD2425WSOB12359
	2.	PWD2425WSOB12360

(धर्मेन्द्र पायल)
अधीक्षण अभियन्ता
सा.नि.वि. वृत डूंगरपुर
DIPR/C/13350/2024

कार्यालय अति. मुख्य अभियन्ता, सार्वजनिक निर्माण विभाग, संभाग-टोंक
क्रमांकः- कैशियर/24-25/डी-3584-93 दिनांकः 23.12.2024
संशोधन निविदा सूचना संख्याः 09/2024-25
इस कार्यालय द्वारा जारी निविदा सूचना संख्या 09/2024-25 पत्रांक 3431-3440 दिनांक 02.12.2024 के द्वारा लगायी गई है। जिसमें क्रम संख्या 02 अंकित खण्ड महवा के कार्य में BOQ में त्रुटि होने पर पुनः BOQ अपलोड करने हेतु निविदा की तिथियां में निम्नानुसार संशोधन किया जाता है:- Old RO. No. DIPR/C/12391/24

विवरण	पूर्व में प्रकाशित तिथियां	संशोधित तिथियां
निविदा आवेदन डाउनलोड करने की तारीख (वेबसाइट पर) एवं निविदा फार्म जमा कराने की तारीख (वेबसाइट पर)	दिनांक 03.12.2024 प्रातः 11.00 बजे से दिनांक 23.12.2024 को सायं 06.00 बजे तक	दिनांक 03.12.2024 प्रातः 11.00 बजे से दिनांक 02.01.2025 को सायं 06.00 बजे तक
प्री बिड का आयोजन	प्रीबिड मिटिंग का आयोजन दिनांक 17.12.2024 एवं क्वेरिज भिजवाने की दिनांक 16.12.2024 को सायं 4.00 बजे तक	प्रीबिड मिटिंग का आयोजन दिनांक 27.12.2024 एवं क्वेरिज भिजवाने की दिनांक 26.12.2024 को सायं 4.00 बजे तक
ऑनलाईन तकनीकी निविदा खोलने की तारीख	दिनांक 24.12.2024 दोपहर 12.00 बजे	दिनांक 03.01.2025 दोपहर 12.00 बजे

निविदा की शेष शर्तें यथावत रहेंगी।
NIB Code: PWD2425A3101, PWD2425WLOB11390, PWD2425WLOB11391
(पेमराज मीना)
अति. मुख्य अभियन्ता, सा.नि.वि. संभाग टोंक
DIPR/C/13573/2024

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER
UPPER INDRAVATI PROJECT, AT/PO: MUKHIGUDA, DIST:KALAHANDI. ODISHA, PIN: 766026
e-mail address : cceuip1987@gmail.com / louiipbbsr@gmail.com

1. Type of Work : Road works
2. Total No. of Works : 03 nos.
3. Approximate value of work : Rs.2.46 to 2.53 Cr. (Excluding GST)
4. Tender Paper Cost : Rs. 10,000/- (online)
5. Bid Security / E.M.D. : Rs.2,45,802.00 - Rs.2,52,628.00 (Online)
6. Period of Completion : 10 (Ten calendar months).
7. Class of Contractor : 'B' & 'A' Class

Procurement Officer	e-Procurement No.	Bid Amount	Availability of online viewing of Tender prior to Bidding		Bid clarification	Submission & Availability bid on-line	Date & time of opening of Technical Bid
			From	To			
1	2		3	4	5	6	7
CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER UPPER INDRAVATI PROJECT, AT/PO: MUKHIGUDA, DIST. KALAHANDI ODISHA,PIN:766026	CCE, UIP-05(01-03)/ 2024-25, Dt.18.12.2024.	Rs. 2.51 cr. to Rs.2.52 cr. (Excluding GST)	30.12.2024 (10.00 AM)	15.01.2025 (up to 5.00 PM)	30.12.2024 to 02.01.2025 During office hour	30.12.2024 (10.00 AM) to 15.01.2025 (up to 5.00 PM)	17.01.2025 at 12:00 Noon

Date of opening of technical bid :**Dt-17.01.2025 at 12.00 PM** in the O/O the Chief Construction Engineer, UIP, Mukhiguda, Kalahandi, Odisha, PIN-766026.
Date of opening of financial bid : To be decided after finalization of Technical Bid.
Further details can be seen from the Govt. Website **www.tendersorissa.gov.in**
Chief Construction Engineer, Upper Indravati Project, Mukhiguda
A-748: OIPR-32352/11/0009/2425

BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD
INVITATION FOR TENDERS (Through KPP Portal Only)
BWSSB invites tenders in two stage tender system from eligible contractors for the following works.

Sl. No.	Name of the Works	Amount put to Tender / EMD Amount
	Office of the Chief Engineer (East), 6th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G. Road, Bangalore - 560 009.	
IFT	NO.BWSSB/CE(E)/ACE(E)/DCE(M)-I/TA(E)/9809/2024-25	Dt:26.12.2024
1	Replacement of 100mm dia CI line by 100mm dia DI water supply pipe line to reduce UFW and to provide feeder line of 200mm dia and 150mm dia to improve water supply facilities to 3rd Block, Koramangala coming under Koramangala-2 Service Station of AEESE-5 sub division. **(Call-3) Indent No: 1678.**	Rs. 359.96 Lakhs / Rs. 5,40,000/-
2	Replacement of 100mm dia CI line by 100mm dia DI water supply pipe line to reduce UFW and to improve water supply facilities to 4th block, Koramangala-2 coming under Koramangala service station of AEESE-5 sub division. **(Call-3) Indent No: 1680.**	Rs. 320.20 Lakhs / Rs. 4,80,000/-
3	Replacement of 200, 150, 100mm dia DI water supply line by laying 200mm, 150mm, 100mm dia CI water line in OMBR layout (Part-A) pertaining to OMBR S/s of AEE(E)-2-2 sub division.	Rs. 158.63 Lakhs / Rs.2,38,000/-
4	Replacement of 200, 150, 100mm dia CI water supply line by laying 200mm, 150mm, 100mm dia DI water line in OMBR layout (Part-B) pertaining to OMBR S/s of AEE(E)-2-2 Sub Division.	Rs. 158.63 Lakhs / Rs. 2,38,000/-
5	Replacement of 200, 150, 100mm dia CI water supply line by laying 200mm, 150mm, 100mm dia DI water line in Kasthurinagara (Part-A) pertaining to OMBR S/s of AEE(E)-2-2 Sub Division.	Rs. 158.63 Lakhs / Rs. 2,38,000/-
6	Replacement of 200, 150, 100mm dia CI water supply line by laying 200mm, 150mm, 100mm dia DI water line in Kasthurinagara (Part-B) pertaining to OMBR S/s of AEE(E)-2-2 Sub Division.	Rs. 158.63 Lakhs / Rs. 2,38,000/-

For all the above works, Last date for receipt of tenders : **10.01.2025 upto 16:00 Hrs.** The Tenders will be opened on: **13.01.2025 after 16.00 Hrs.**
Sd/- Chief Engineer (East)
The details regarding the tender and participatin in the e-procurement process can be obtained by logging on to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** For further details contact the above signed office during working hours.
DIPR/CP/JA/3990/2024-25

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जखीरा नर्सरी परिसर, सवाई माधोपुर रोड, टोंक
दूरभाष नं. 01432-264479, E-mail: dct.tonk.forest@rajasthan.gov.in
NOTICE INVITING TENDER
Tender are invited from eligible contractors/firm for various forestry works/Goods at forests as following:

क्र. सं.	UBN Number	NIB code	Estimate Cost	Start Date	End Date
1	FOR2425 WLOB03035	FOR2425A2092	746.63001 Lac.	18.12.2024	07.01.2025
2	FOR2425 WLOB03039	FOR2425A2096	6.00 Lac.	18.12.2024	26.12.2024

Tender can be seen downloaded at www.sppp.rajasthan.gov.in & www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in
DIPR/C/13367/24 उप वन संरक्षक, टोंक

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Ground Floor,
next to H&M store, VR Chennai
10.30am - 9pm
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Government Support Tamil Nadu
In Association With The Hindu
Palladium Patrons TNQ Foundation, Photo South Asia

A BG-BGE

HERZLIYA

Israel says suspected Palestinian attacker stabs woman to death

AFP

A woman in her eighties was fatally stabbed in Herzliya, Israel, on Friday morning. The suspected attacker, a 28-year-old Palestinian from the West Bank, was "neutralised and arrested" at the scene, the police said. Despite resuscitation efforts at Tel Aviv Ichilov hospital, she was pronounced dead upon arrival. AFP

BEIJING

62-year-old who killed 35 in China car ramming sentenced to death

REUTERS

A man named Fan Weiqiu was sentenced to death on Friday for killing 35 people in a car attack in Zhuhai, China, on November 11. Fan, 62, drove into a crowd exercising outside a sports complex, motivated by anger over his divorce. This incident marks the deadliest attack in China since 2014. AFP

LAHORE

Pakistan-based LeT's deputy leader Abdul Rehman Makki dies

Hafiz Abdul Rahman Makki, the brother-in-law of Mumbai attacks mastermind Hafiz Saeed and deputy chief of banned Jamaat-ud-Dawa, died of a heart attack in Lahore on Friday. Makki had been ill due to diabetes and was undergoing treatment. He was designated a global terrorist by the UN in 2023. PTI

BEIJING

China sanctions 7 companies over U.S. military assistance to Taiwan

AP

China imposed sanctions on seven U.S. companies in response to recent American military aid to Taiwan, which China claims as its territory. The sanctions follow U.S. President Joe Biden's authorisation of $571 million for Taiwan's defence and a military spending Bill that includes "provisions against China". AP

S. Korea's National Assembly votes to impeach Acting President Han

The impeachment of Han Duck-soo passed with a 192-0 vote, despite protests from the ruling People Power Party; Deputy Prime Minister Choi Sang-mok will assume Han's duties; situation in the country remains volatile as public discontent rises

Associated Press
SEOUL

South Korea's Opposition-controlled National Assembly voted on Friday to impeach Acting President Han Duck-soo despite vehement protests by governing party lawmakers, further deepening the country's political crisis set off by President Yoon Suk Yeol's stunning imposition of martial law and ensuing impeachment.

The single-chamber National Assembly passed Mr. Han's impeachment motion with a 192-0 vote, despite protests from the ruling People Power Party (PPP), which boycotted the session and claimed the vote was invalid.

Unstable chair: Han Duck-soo leaves the Government Complex in Seoul after his impeachment motion was passed on Friday. AFP

Mr. Han's impeachment means he will be stripped of the powers and duties of the President until the Constitutional Court decides whether to dismiss or reinstate him. The court is already reviewing whether to uphold Mr. Yoon's earlier impeachment. The impeachments of the country's top two officials has worsened its political turmoil, deepened economic uncertainties and hurt its international image.

In a statement, Mr. Han called his impeachment "regrettable" but said he respects the Assembly's decision and will suspend his duties to "not add to additional confusion and uncertainty". He said he will wait for "a swift, wise decision" by the Constitutional Court.

Mr. Han's impeachment motion accuses him of collaborating and abetting Mr. Yoon's declaration of martial law. It also accuses Mr. Han of attempting to obstruct the restoration of the Constructional Court's full membership and of delaying investigations into Mr. Yoon's alleged rebellion by not appointing independent counsels.

Deputy Prime Minister Choi Sang-mok will assume Mr. Han's duties during this period. The situation in South Korea remains volatile, with ongoing investigations into Mr. Yoon's actions and rising public discontent regarding political stability.

Azerbaijan plane crash due to 'external interference'

Agence France-Presse
MOSCOW

The Azerbaijan Airlines plane that crashed in Kazakhstan this week suffered physical "external interference", the airline and Azerbaijan's Transport Minister said on Friday, citing preliminary results of an investigation, adding to speculation it was hit by a Russian air defence system. The jet crashed near the Kazakh city of Aktau on Wednesday, killing 38 of the 67 people on board, after attempting to land at its destination in the Russian city of Grozny and then diverting far off course across the Caspian Sea.

Russia's aviation chief said on Friday that Grozny was being attacked by Ukrainian drones at the time the plane had tried to land, but the Kremlin has declined to comment on reports the plane was accidentally shot down by Russian missiles.

Emergency specialists working at the crash site of an Azerbaijan plane which crashed near the city of Aktau on Wednesday. REUTERS

Statements from Azerbaijan citing the investigation suggest Baku believes the plane was hit mid-air.

"Based on the opinion of experts and on the words of eyewitnesses, it can be concluded that there was external interference," Azerbaijani's Transport Minister, Rashad Nabiyev, told reporters. "It is necessary to find out from what kind of weapon," he added, citing reports from survivors of hearing "three explosions" as the plane was over Grozny.

Germany's President dissolves Parliament, sets polls for Feb. 23

Associated Press
FRANKFURT

It was the only way to give the country a stable government capable of tackling its problems, he says

German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier on Friday ordered Parliament dissolved and set new elections for February 23 in the wake of the collapse of Chancellor Olaf Scholz's coalition, saying it was the only way to give the country a stable government capable of tackling its problems.

Mr. Scholz lost a confidence vote on December 16 and leads a minority government after his unpopular and notoriously rancorous three-party coalition collapsed on November 6 when he fired his Finance Minister in a dispute over how to revitalise Germany's stagnant economy.

Mr. Steinmeier said he made the decision because it was clear after consultation with party leaders that there was no agreement among Germany's political parties on a majority for a new government in the current Parliament.

Central University of Himachal Pradesh
(Established under Central Universities Act, 2009)

Employment Notice No. 003/2024, Dated 24.12.2024 for TEACHING POSITIONS

Central University of Himachal Pradesh invites online applications from eligible candidates for various teaching positions to be filled on regular/contract (against lien vacancy) basis. The Candidates may apply online from 24.12.2024. **Last Date 23.01.2025.** For further details please visit University Website i.e., **www.cuhimachal.ac.in**

REGISTRAR

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Superintending Engineer Cum Project Manager, WCDC, ZILA PARISHAD BARMER
ई–मेल आई डी SEWDSC.BARMER@RAJASTHAN.GOV.IN Telephone No. :- 02982-220733
No. 3732 Date: 19.12.2024

NOTICE INVITING BID
NIB No 35-37 YEAR 2024-25

Bids for Watershed Development Works are invited from interested bidders up to 06.01.2025 at 06:00 PM as per following details. Other particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal https://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in or https://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in of the state departmental website.

Sr. No.	Block	NIB No.	Estimate (Rs in Lacs)	NIB Code	UBN Code
1	Baytu	35/2024-25	264.38	WSC2425A0445	WSC2425WSRC00898
2	Baytu	36/2024-25	136.00	WSC2425A0446	WSC2425WSRC00899
3	Baytu	37/2024-25	51.58	WSC2425A0447	WSC2425WSRC00900

SE CUM PROJECT MANAGER, WCDC, WATERSHED DEVELOPMENT & SOIL CONSERVATION, BARMER

DIPR/C/13460/2024

Yemen's Houthis claim missile attack on Tel Aviv

Agence France-Presse
SANAA

Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi rebels said they have fired a missile at Israel's Ben Gurion Airport on Friday, following Israeli air strikes on Sanaa's International Airport that killed four.

The Houthis also launched drones targeting Tel Aviv and a ship in the Arabian Sea, asserting that Israeli actions would strengthen Yemeni resolve to support Palestinians.

Israel reported intercepting the missile before it reached its territory. The attacks come amid escalating tensions and retaliatory strikes between Israel and Houthi forces since the Gaza conflict intensified.

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E-mail : edrugs.kmscl@kerala.gov.in,
website : www.kmscl.kerala.gov.in, CIN No. U24233KL2007SGC021616

No.KMSCL/ED/81/2024 Date : 27.12.2024

E-TENDER NOTICE

Online bids are invited from manufacturers/direct importers / loan licensees on behalf of Department of Health, Govt of Kerala for the procurement of following categories of drugs / supplies for the year 2025-26.

Sl. No.	Tender No. and Date	Category	No. of Items
1.	KMSCL/ED/I&II/RC/2024/031 dtd. 27.12.2024	Drugs	419
2.	KMSCL/ED/III-VIII/RC/2024/032 dtd. 27.12.2024	Consumables & Surgical items	163
3.	KMSCL/ED/SPL/RC/2024/033 dtd. 27.12.2024	Specialty Drugs	153
4.	KMSCL/ED/ACD/RC/2024/034 dtd. 27.12.2024	Anti Cancer Drugs	119

Schedule of dates

	Date	Time
Pre-Tender meeting	Will be published in the official website of the Corporation	
Last date of online uploading of tenders	20.01.2025	05.00pm.
Date of technical bid opening	23.01.2025	11.00 am. onwards

Tenders shall be downloaded and submitted online through the e-tender portal **www.etenders.kerala.gov.in**.

(Sd/-) MANAGING DIRECTOR (Tender Inviting Authority)

RECOGNITION

Melbourne Cricket Club honour for Tendulkar

FILE PHOTO

The Melbourne Cricket Club on Friday said Indian icon Sachin Tendulkar has accepted its invitation to become an honorary member of the prestigious institution. Founded in 1838, the club is one of the oldest sports clubs in Australia and is responsible for the management and development of the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

IN GOOD TOUCH

Thought we were in for a Kohli masterclass: Smith

AFP

Australia batter Steve Smith said that Virat Kohli looked set for a big knock before falling for 36 on the second day of the fourth Test at the MCG. "It was probably the first ball I think he actually played on that fifth, sixth stump line (when he got out). He was really disciplined and I thought we were in for a bit of a masterclass."

GAINING GROUND

Bosch's breezy knock takes the game away from Pakistan

AFP

Debutant Corbin Bosch, *in pic,* hit 81 not out and Marco Jansen claimed two wickets as South Africa took control on the second day of the first Test against Pakistan at SuperSport Park on Friday. **The scores:** Pakistan 211 & 88/3 in 22 overs vs South Africa 301 in 73.4 overs (Markram 89, Bosch 81 n.o., Khurram 3/75, Naseem 3/92).

NEW HIGH

Ervine, Bennett score centuries in record total for Zimbabwe

FILE PHOTO

Craig Ervine, *in pic*, and Brian Bennett scored tons as Zimbabwe posted its highest ever total on the second day of the first Test against Afghanistan in Bulawayo. The Afghans were 95 for two at stumps. **The scores:** Zimbabwe 586 in 135.2 overs (Sean Williams 154, Ervine 104, Bennett 110) vs Afghanistan 95/2 in 30 overs.

Smith's hundred & late strikes put Australia in a dominant position

The Aussie great registers his 34th Test ton; Cummins stars both with bat and ball while Boland proves his value yet again; India's hopes rest on Pant and the all-rounders as Jaiswal, Kohli flatter to deceive after another failure for Rohit

IND IN AUS

K.C. Vijaya Kumar
MELBOURNE

Mix-up: The Australian players are cock-a-hoop as Jaiswal and Kohli are stranded at the non-striker's end. GETTY IMAGES

A modern great's ton ensured Australia's dominance while a youngster's counter-punch helmed India's brief resistance. Steve Smith's fluent 140 placed the host in a dominant position in the fourth Test on Friday.

The former Australian captain's ton helped Pat Cummins and his men post 474 in the first innings. At the second day's close here at the Melbourne Cricket Ground, India, after riding on Yashasvi Jaiswal's 82, finished with 164 for five. The 22-year-old was set for a big knock before a mix-up with Virat Kohli, triggered a run-out.

Prior to this evening meltdown, India's first innings commenced with Rohit Sharma returning as an opener.

The skipper punched Cummins for initial runs and with Jaiswal looking confident, India nursed hopes. But they were dashed when Rohit attempted to pull Cummins, paused mid-stride and popped a catch.

Crucial strike

K.L. Rahul walked in and drove with elan while southpaw Jaiswal uppercut Cummins. The duo settled in but on the brink of tea, Cummins castled Rahul with a delivery that curled in and then straightened to rattle the timber. India 51 for two, and in trouble.

In the last session, Kohli was greeted with a mixture of boos and the 'Kohli' chants. His petty run-in with Sam Konstas on Thursday, has obviously split his fandom. Shutting out the noise, he drove Cummins and Mitchell Starc on either side of the pitch.

Meanwhile, Jaiswal tucked into Starc, lofted Nathan Lyon, and hoisted Mitchell Marsh for six. More was on offer but when he dabbed Scott Boland straight to Cummins and scampered for a risky single, Kohli did not budge. It became a triple blow as the latter edged Boland and nightwatchman Akash Deep fell for a blob.

Earlier in the morning, Australia resumed at the overnight 311 for six. Just as the sun lit up the venue, the host's first innings gained runs through shots and the odd edge as Smith and Cummins stitched a fine seventh-wicket partnership.

Pitch intruder

Some avoidable drama happened when a fan ran in. Rohit deftly avoided the intruder while Kohli found a stranger's arm around his shoulder before the security personnel stepped in. India's struggle became evident when Smith pulled a six off Jasprit Bumrah.

Soon the former Australian captain reached his 34th Test hundred and while crossing over, Kohli patted the centurion.

The alliance worth 112 runs concluded when Cummins freed his arms against Ravindra Jadeja and offered a catch in the deep.

With Mohammed Siraj bowling wide bouncers, runs were gifted. Australia had a lunch score of 454 for seven with the morning session yielding 143 from 27 overs.

In the afternoon, Jadeja got one to beat Starc's bat. Smith (140) remained aggressive but when he failed to clear Akash over the infield, the ball grazed his bat and rolled onto his stumps.

The last-wicket pair of Lyon and Boland added some mirth with two successful reviews.

Finally Rohit leant on Bumrah (four for 99) to prise out a wicket, and then prepared for his short-lived opening stint.

SCOREBOARD

AUSTRALIA — 1ST INNINGS

Sam Konstas lbw b Jadeja 60 (*65b, 6x4, 2x6*), Usman Khawaja c Rahul b Bumrah 57 (*121b, 6x4*), Marnus Labuschagne c Kohli b Washington 72 (*145b, 7x4*), Steve Smith b Akash 140 (*197b, 13x4, 3x6*),Travis Head b Bumrah 0 (*7b*), Mitchell Marsh c Pant b Bumrah 4 (*13b, 1x4*), Alex Carey c Pant b Akash 31 (*41b, 1x6*), Pat Cummins c Nitish b Jadeja 49 (*63b, 7x4*), Mitchell Starc b Jadeja 15 (*36b, 1x6*), Nathan Lyon lbw b Bumrah 13 (*18b, 1x4*), Scott Boland (not out) 6 (*36b*); Extras (lb-11, nb-6, w-10): 27; Total (in 122.4 overs): 474.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-89 (Konstas, 19.2 overs), 2-154 (Khawaja, 44.1), 3-237 (Labuschagne, 65.1), 4-240 (Head, 66.3), 5-246 (Marsh, 68.6), 6-299 (Carey, 82.1), 7-411 (Cummins, 104.1), 8-455 (Starc, 113.3), 9-455 (Smith, 114.1).

INDIA BOWLING

Bumrah 28.4-9-99-4, Siraj 23-3-122-0, Akash 26-8-94-2, Jadeja 23-4-78-3, Nitish 7-0-21-0, Washington 15-2-49-1.

INDIA — IST INNINGS

Yashasvi Jaiswal (run out) 82 (*118b, 11x4, 1x6*), Rohit Sharma c Boland b Cummins 3 (*5b*), K.L. Rahul b Cummins 24 (*42b, 3x4*), Virat Kohli c Carey b Boland 36 (*86b, 4x4*), Akash Deep c Lyon b Boland 0 (*13b*), Rishabh Pant (batting) 6 (7b), Ravindra Jadeja (batting) 4 (7b, 1x4); Extras (lb-2, nb-2, w-5): 9; Total (for five wkts., in 46 overs): 164.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-8 (Rohit, 1.6), 2-51 (Rahul, 14.6), 3-153 (Jaiswal, 40.6), 4-154 (Kohli, 42.1), 5-159 (Akash, 44.3).

AUSTRALIA BOWLING

Starc 13-0-48-0, Cummins 13-2-57-2, Boland 12-4-24-2, Lyon 5-1-18-0, Marsh 3-0-15-0.

Being out of form and out of runs is different, says Smith

K.C. Vijaya Kumar
MELBOURNE

Top knock: Smith has returned to form just at the right time. AP

The long drought and the sudden downpour defines Steve Smith's forays to the batting crease. While questions lingered about his poor yield, he answered with tons at Brisbane's Gabba and the Melbourne Cricket Ground in the current Border-Gavaskar Trophy series.

Looking back at his return to runs, Smith told the media on Friday: "You got to trust what you are trying to do. I have played the game long enough to know that you can have ups and downs. There's a difference between being out of form and out of runs. You need a lot of luck on these wickets to get big runs and last week (at the Gabba) I had my fair share."

Reflecting on the fourth Test, the former Australian captain said: "It was obviously a really good partnership (between Virat Kohli and Yashasvi Jaiswal) and to break that one, and then get the two more wickets, it was a huge last hour for us. Looked like Jaiswal called yes, ran, and Virat sent him back."

Smith lauded his skipper Pat Cummins: "I thought Patty played really nicely. Positive intent. We were able to get a nice partnership together and take a bit of the momentum of the game from that point."

As for Sam Konstas, Smith exclaimed: "He was reverse ramping (Jasprit) Bumrah and I was having a heart attack up in the box!"

Washington confident India batters will fight hard

K.C. Vijaya Kumar
MELBOURNE

> Had conversations with Ash, especially in terms of conditions in Australia. He gave me a lot of insight and it definitely helped me

A weekend of resistance awaits Washington Sundar. The all-rounder along with the lower-order have the onerous task of whittling down India's current deficit of 310 runs against Australia in the fourth Test in progress here at the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

Speaking to the media on Friday, Washington said: "We were in a great position to get big runs, especially when Virat bhai and Yash (Jaiswal) were batting. But we will still come back and continue to fight. The energy is very good in the dressing room, we are all positive. There are still three days, a lot of overs to play, so it will just be about us trying to fight really hard and get things done for the team."

Queried about the pitch, the off-spinner replied: "It will be a good surface to bat on. I think the wicket wouldn't change much, so it will be an exciting couple of days."

Stepping into R. Ashwin's shoes, Washington spoke about the discussions he had with the former: "Had a lot of conversations with Ash, especially in terms of conditions in Australia. He gave me a lot of insight and it definitely helped me."

Picked both for his spin and batting, the all-rounder felt that the team's faith has to be repaid: "Isn't it amazing that the team wants me to do really well in all aspects of the game. That's a great opportunity for me. No matter which situation of the game I get to be in, it's just about being out there, putting in the right energy and getting things done for the team."

Deepti magic seals India's series sweep over West Indies

Shayan Acharya
VADODARA

On the prowl: India clinched the ODI series 3-0 and continued its dominance over West Indies. PTI

On the eve of the final women's ODI, India's bowling coach Aavishkar Salvi referred to Deepti Sharma as a 'modern-day legend'.

At the Kotambi Stadium on Friday, Deepti showed why she is rated highly in international cricket as her all-round performance – a six for 31, followed by an unbeaten 39 (48b, 3x4, 1x6) – guided India to a five-wicket win against West Indies and a 3-0 series sweep.

The visitor opted to bat and the decision backfired as Renuka Singh Thakur (four for 29) made the most of the hazy weather and removed Qiana Joseph, Hayley Matthews and Deandra Dottin inside the first five overs. Reeling at nine for three, it seemed to be an uphill task for West Indies to recover. However, with Shemaine Campbelle (46, 62b) and Chinelle Henry (61, 72b) adding 97 runs for the fourth wicket, WI breached the 100-run mark.

Looking to be aggressive, Campbelle raced down the track, hoping to go over long-on, but was caught by Pratika Rawal on the fence as Deepti provided the Women in Blue with the much-needed breakthrough. Deepti then spun her web en route to her second six-wicket feat in the format as West Indies lost its last six wickets for just 62 runs and ended its innings at 162.

However, it wasn't an easy chase for India as it lost Smriti Mandhana and Harleen Deol in quick succession. Youngster Pratika Rawal, too, failed to capitalise on a steady start, but captain Harmanpreet Kaur held her nerve and went on a counter-attacking mode as the host crawled back.

> I like challenges as those are the moments when you can step up and deliver for your team. Crunch situations don't come too often, so when I am in that phase, I always enjoy being there. I back my all-round skills to handle those situations
>
> DEEPTI

Though Afy Fletcher cleaned up Harmanpreet, India did not lose the plot as Jemimah Rodrigues and Deepti came up with a 56-run stand for the fifth wicket.

Jemimah relied on her natural game, while Deepti made the most of a reprieve to anchor the innings. By the time, Karishma Ramharrack ended Jemimah's innings, India had inched closer to the finish line and Deepti stood firm and added 38 runs along with power-hitter Richa Ghosh.

As the crowd chanted her name, Richa flexed her muscles and sealed the deal with a couple of maximums.

The scores: West Indies 162 in 38.5 overs (Shemaine Campbelle 46, Chinelle Henry 61, Renuka Singh 4/29, Deepti Sharma 6/31) lost to India 167/5 in 28.2 overs (Harmanpreet Kaur 32, Deepti 39 n.o.); **Toss:** West Indies; **PoM:** Deepti; **PoS:** Renuka.

Steelers to meet Pirates in PKL final

Saikat Chakraborty
PUNE

Steelers edged past Yoddhas.

Haryana Steelers edged past UP Yoddhas 28-25 in Pro Kabaddi League (PKL) first semifinal here at the Sree Shiv Chhatrapati Sports Complex, Balewadi, on Friday, booking its place in the final for the second successive season.

The first half was closely contested. However, Steelers intensified its efforts in the second, inflicting an all-out on Yoddhas.

The UP-based team mounted a comeback, with Gagan Gowda's Super 10 keeping it in contention.

In a thrilling finish, Steelers executed a crucial Super Tackle with seconds remaining to secure the victory. In the grand finale, Steelers will face Patna Pirates, which defeated Dabang Delhi 32-28 in the second semifinal.

The final will be played at the same venue on Sunday.

INBRIEF

Liverpool goes seven points clear; Man United in tailspin

Liverpool powered seven points clear at the top of the Premier League as it beat Leicester 3-1, while Bruno Fernandes was sent off in Manchester United's dismal 2-0 defeat at lowly Wolves. The rampant Reds, who hold a game in hand on Chelsea, have been beaten just once in 17 league matches this season.

The results: Wolves 2 (Cunha 58, Hwang 90+9) bt Manchester United 0; Liverpool 3 (Gakpo 45+1, Jones 49, Salah 82) bt Leicester 1 (Ayew 6).

Bengal to meet MP in women's one-day final

Dhara Gujjar's run-a-ball 123 (123b, 16x4) guided Bengal to a six-wicket win over defending champion Railways in the semifinals of the senior women's one-day trophy at the Niranjan Shah Stadium in Rajkot on Friday.

The scores (semifinals): Railways 300/5 in 50 overs (C.H. Jhansi Lakshmi 120, Nuzhat Parween 116, Sneh Rana 30 n.o., Saika Ishaque 3/48) lost to Bengal 301/4 in 49 overs (Dhara Gujjar 123, Mita Paul 76, Tanusree Sarkar 35).
Mumbai 161 in 35 overs (Ira Jadhav 35, Khushi 35 n.o., Shuchi Upadhyay 5/48) lost to Madhya Pradesh 165/3 in 47.2 overs (Ananya Dubey 75 n.o., Aayushi Shukla 44 n.o.).

LIVE TELECAST

South Africa vs Pakistan: 1st Test, day 3, JioCinema App, 1.30 p.m.

Zimbabwe vs Afghanistan: 1st Test, day 3, FanCode, 1.30 p.m.

ISL: Sports 18-3 & JioCinema, 5 & 7.30 p.m.

Hockey: HIL, DD Sports, Sony Sports Ten 1, 2, 3 (SD & HD) & LIV, 6 & 8.15 p.m.

Serie A: gxr.world, 7.30, 10 p.m.& 1.15 a.m. (Sunday)

Australia vs India: 4th Test, day 4, Star Sports 1 (SD & HD) & Hotstar, 5 a.m. (Sunday)

Kerala's victory march continues

The southern outfit beats J&K 1-0 to seal its 31st entry into the semifinals and will face Manipur, which downed Delhi in Thursday's quarterfinal

SANTOSH TROPHY

Sports Bureau
HYDERABAD

Surging ahead: Kerala showed why it is a powerhouse in the tournament. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Naseeb Rahman scored the match-winner for Kerala as it recorded a 1-0 victory over Jammu & Kashmir in the quarterfinal of the 78th Santosh Trophy national football championship at the Deccan Arena here on Friday.

Rahman found the target in the 73rd minute and is now the joint second-highest scorer of the tournament (alongside Tamil Nadu's K. Lijo) with seven goals to his name.

This is Kerala's 31st entry into the semifinal and will next face Manipur on Sunday.

With a potent attack, Kerala's team dynamics allowed it to score an impressive 29 goals in the campaign while its defence too stood firm, conceding only four goals so far.

J&K, under the tactical guidance of former Indian defender and coach Mehrajuddin Wadoo, showed flashes of brilliance. In the 27th minute, Aakif Javaid dashed down the right flank and delivered a cross to Talib Nazir inside the penalty box. Despite having ample time and space, Nazir's shot sailed over the crossbar as the first-half ended goalless.

After the break, Joseph Justin delivered a cross that the defenders failed to clear, allowing Naseeb Rahman to take control with his chest. He showcased his composure and fired a decisive volley past the goalkeeper, putting Kerala ahead.

J&K came close to scoring the equaliser in the 88th minute when Kerala custodian S. Hajmal's effort to clear the ball went astray. The ball landed at the feet of Shahmeer Tariq, whose shot agonisingly soared over the crossbar.

The results: Quarterfinals: Kerala 1 (Rahman 73) bt J&K 0; Meghalaya 1 (L. Mawnai 86) lost to Services 2 (Bidhyasagar Singh 33, Rahul Ramakrishnan 46).

VIJAY HAZARE TROPHY: FOURTH-ROUND FIXTURES

Group-A: Jaipur: Assam vs Haryana, Goa vs Uttarakhand, Jharkhand vs Gujarat, Manipur vs Odisha.

Group-B: Mumbai: Meghalaya vs Rajasthan, Railways vs Sikkim.

Navi Mumbai: Maharashtra vs Himachal Pradesh, Andhra vs Services.

Group-C: Ahmedabad: Arunachal Pradesh vs Karnataka, Hyderabad vs Pondicherry, Nagaland vs Saurashtra, Mumbai vs Punjab.

Group-D: Vizianagaram: Jammu & Kashmir vs Tamil Nadu, Chhattisgarh vs Uttar Pradesh.

Visakhapatnam: Chandigarh vs Vidarbha.

Group-E: Hyderabad: Baroda vs Bengal, Delhi vs Kerala, Madhya Pradesh vs Tripura.

Group D matches begin at 8.45 a.m.

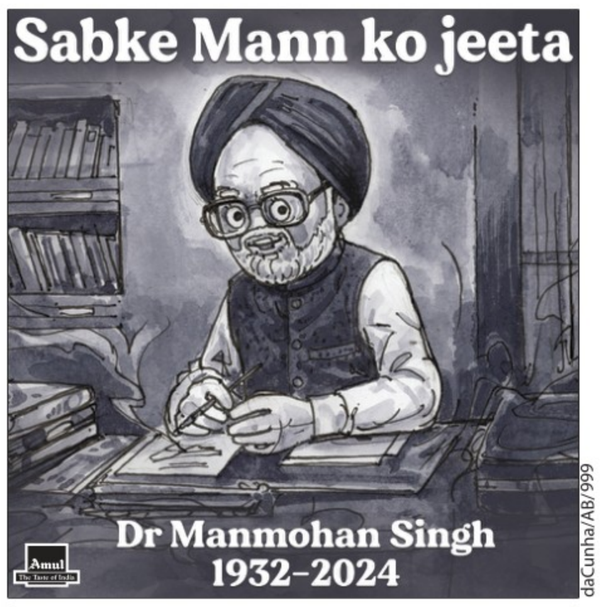
Rest of the games start at 9 a.m.

Honours even as MSC and OFC fail to score

ISL

Sports Bureau

Mohammedan SC and Odisha FC failed to break the deadlock as the two sides played out a 0-0 draw in an Indian Super League fixture at the Kishore Bharati Krirangan in Kolkata on Friday.



Evaldo is expected to score in the Chief Minister's Trophy

BENGALURU: Evaldo, who has been well-prepared, is expected to score in the Chief Minister's Trophy (2,000m), the feature event of the races to be held here on Saturday (Dec. 28).
False rails (width about 7.5m from 1,600m to the winning post) will be in position.

1 BUCKPASSER PLATE (1,200m), maiden 2-y-o only, (Terms), 1.00 p.m.: 1. Einaudi (2) Trevor 56, 2. Hyperdrive (4) L.A. Rozario 56, 3. Imperador (6) Mukesh K 56, 4. Konkaraah (3) Sandesh 56, 5. Lightning Blitz (7) P. Siddaraju 56, 6. Allegro Dance (1) Darshan 54.5, 7. Doncaster Belle (9) Akshay K 54.5, 8. Eternal Glory (8) Koshi K 54.5, 9. Gloriousness (5) Suraj 54.5 and 10. Honeypot (10) Angad 54.5.
1. IMPERADOR, 2. GLORIOUSNESS, 3 EINAUDI

2 TALAKAVERI PLATE (1,400m), maiden 3-y-o only, (Terms), 1.30: 1. Blue Saint (9) Rayan 57, 2. Carter (7) Shariq Md 57, 3. Equalizer (6) Mark 57, 4. Gismo (5) P. Mani 57, 5. Lords Grace (12) Chethan K 57, 6. Michiko (10) Mukesh K 57, 7. Torobravo (2) L.A. Rozario 57, 8. Windcleaver (4) Vinod Shinde 57, 9. Basilica (11) Trevor 55.5, 10. Habibti (8) Akshay K 55.5, 11. N R I Victory (1) Arshad 55.5 and 12. Thrill Of Brazil (3) Tauseef 55.5.
1. BASILICA, 2. MICHIKO, 3. TOROBRAVO

3 GANGA PLATE (1,200m), rated 00 to 25, 5-y-o & over, 2.00: 1. Lady Godiva (8) Chethan K 62.5, 2. Capri Girl (1) Angad 62, 3. Dawn Rising (10) Salman Khan 61.5, 4. Empress Bella (7) A. Prakesh 60, 5. Chiraag (4) Rayan 59, 6. Princess Jasmine (9) K. Suhas 59, 7. Firefinch (3) R. Pradeep 57.5, 8. Recreator (6) Anish Anamo 57.5, 9. The Intruder (5) L.A. Rozario 53, 10. Burning Arrow (11) M. Rajesh K 52.5 and 11. Master Victory (2) Saddam H 52.
1. THE INTRUDER, 2. CHIRAAG, 3. CAPRI GIRL

4 MAHANADI STAKES (1,400m), rated 60 to 85, 2.30: 1. Grizzly (3) Laxman S 60, 2. English Bay (1) M. Naveen 59.5, 3. Vivaldo (7) Akshay K 59.5, 4. Prime Abbess (5) Vinod Shinde 57, 5. Aralina (4) Sandesh 56.5, 6. Mazal Tov (2) L.A. Rozario 56 and 7. Elpenor (6) Trevor 55.
1. ARALINA, 2. VIVALDO

5 SHANTI FALLS PLATE (Div. II), (1,200m), rated 20 to 45, 3.00: 1. Running Bolt (9) R. Robert 60, 2. Silicon Star (7) M. Chandrashekar 57.5, 3. Sienna Princess (8) R. Pradeep 57, 4. Daiki (10) M. Rajesh K 56.5, 5. Multiqueen (5) P. Mani 56, 6. Mystical Forest (3) Koshi K 56, 7. Reet Petite (1) G. Praveen 56, 8. Royal Whisper (4) Darshan 56, 9. Anzac Parade (2) Trevor 55 and 10. Legendary Impact (6) Shreyas S 55.
1. ANZAC PARADE, 2. SIENNA PRINCESS, 3. LEGENDARY IMPACT

6 D.M. SHIVASWAMY MEMORIAL TROPHY (1,600m), rated 40 to 65, 4-y-o & over, 3.30: 1. King Of War (5) Akshay K 62, 2. Auspicious Queen (3) Mukesh K 60.5, 3. Dynamic Force (6) Srinath 57, 4. Pharazon (8) Arvind K 55.5, 5. Sekhmet (4) Darshan 54, 6. Own Legacy (10) Rayan 53, 7. Red Falcon (9) L.A. Rozario 53, 8. Ancient History (7) Koshi K 51.5, 9. Lex Luthor (2) A. Prakash 51 and 10. Ring Master (1) Vinod Shinde 51.
1. AUSPICIOUS QUEEN, 2. KING OF WAR, 3. PHARAZON

7 CHIEF MINISTER'S TROPHY (2,000m), 3-y-o & over, (Terms), 4.00: 1. Champions Way (4) Suraj 62, 2. Evaldo (3) Sandesh 62, 3. Galahad (2) Akshay K 56 and 4. Magnum (1) Trevor 56.
1. EVALDO 2. MAGNUS

7 SHANTI FALLS PLATE (Div. I), (1,200m), rated 20 to 45, 4-30: 1. Oxytocin (7) R. Ravi 62.5, 2. Precious Gift (8) G. Praveen 62.5, 3. Redouble (2) Srinath 61, 4. Augusto (10) Pavan 60.5, 5. Exceed (9) Trevor 60.5, 6. Dhanteras (6) R. Pradeep 60, 7. Schafenberg (5) Rayan 59.5, 8. Ladylion (1) Jagadeesh 58, 9. Feeling Good (4) K. Suhas 55 and 10. Noble Cause (3) Tousif 55.
1. EXCEED, 2. LADYLION, 3. REDOUBLE

8 HUMAN RIGHTS DAY PLATE (1,400m), rated 20 to 45, 4-y-o & over, 5.00: 1. Breeze Bluster (10) Salman Khan 60, 2. Mega Success (2) Abhishek Mhatre 59, 3. Peridot (7) L.A. Rozario 59, 4. Treasure Chest (11) Trevor 59, 5. Super Marvella (3) Akshay K 58.5, 6. Acantha (12) Srinath 58, 7. Agera (4) Darshan 57.5, 8. The Strikingly (1) Shariq Md 56, 9. Anchorage (8) Shreyas S 53, 10. Sea Diamond (6) Koshi K 53, 11. Ice Storm (9) Angad 52.5 and 12. Golden Gallery (5) Likith Appu 50.
1. SUPER MARVELLA, 2. TREASURE CHEST, 3. ANCHORAGE
Day's best: **EVALDO**
Double: **BASILICA - EXCEED**
Jkt: 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9; Tr (i): 1, 2 and 3; (ii): 4, 5 and 6; (iii): 7, 8 and 9.

Chennaiyin faces a stern test when it faces Bengaluru which will look to defend well

Sankar Narayanan E.H.
CHENNAI

A depleted Chennaiyin FC (CFC) will be pushed to the limit when it faces Bengaluru FC (BFC) in an Indian Super League fixture at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium here on Saturday.

Ryan Edwards' suspension has only added pressure on the CFC defensive set-up which had already lost Elsinho to an injury. Head coach Owen Coyle, however, looks at this as a chance for his young Indian players to show their mettle.

"If I were in their position, I'd like to think of it as an opportunity to play against somebody like Sunil Chhetri who has been an outstanding player for India... I would want to get that clean sheet and make sure I am helping my team win a derby," Coyle said on the eve of the match.

Losing its sheen

The BFC defence, which started the season with five consecutive clean sheets, has lost a bit of its sheen. Gerard Zaragoza's men have conceded eight goals in their last three games and will want to rectify that against a creative Chennaiyin frontline.

While the host's aim will be to get a win and stay relevant in the playoffs race, the visitor's goal will be to close in on league leader Mohun Bagan Super Giant.

Task at hand: CFC custodian Mohammad Nawaz will be eager to keep the BFC attackers at bay. X@CHENNAIYINFC

Cast your votes for India's sporting heroes

SPORTSTAR ACES 2025

Sports Bureau

As we bid farewell to an extraordinary year for Indian sports, it's time to express our gratitude to the trailblazers who brought us glory at the seventh edition of the Sportstar ACES Awards.

We invite you to cast your vote in the five Popular Choice categories – Sportsman of the Year, Sportswoman of the Year, National Team of the Year, Club/State Team of the Year, and Sporting Moment of the Year.

Simply scan the given QR code to vote. The voting lines for #SSaces2025 will remain open until January 31, 2025.

Elite panel

The winners of the 17 Jury Awards will be chosen by an elite panel headed by legendary Indian cricketer Sunil Gavaskar. Sporting greats Abhinav Bindra, M.M. Somaya, Viswanathan Anand, Anjali Bhagwat, and Aparna Popat complete the jury.

We'll be presenting a special Chairperson's Award for Sports for Social Good, which recognises individuals or organisations that have leveraged the power of sports to create a positive impact in society.

Harika in joint second place after four rounds

WORLD RAPID CHESS

Sports Bureau

Arjun Erigaisi and Raunak Sadhwani were in the joint fifth place at the end of the fifth round of the World rapid chess championship in Singapore. They were on four points, along with nine others.

Volodar Murzin, Shant Sargyasan and Leinier Dominguez Perez and Daniel Naroditsky were sharing the lead with 4.5 points each. In the day's biggest upset, 18-year-old Denis Lazavik defeated top seed Magnus Carlsen.

Sadhwani also caused a stir when he beat seventh seed Alireza Firouzja in the second round. Among the other Indians, V. Pranav was placed 32nd, followed by R. Praggnanadhaa (56th) and Diptayan Ghosh (69th). Eight rounds remain.

In the women's event, Alice Lee took the sole lead with four points, after winning all her four games. India's D. Harika was among five players in the second place, with 3.5 points; the Chinese duo of Ju Wenjun and Tan Zhongyi, Nino Batsiashvili of Georgia and Gunay Mammadzada of Azerbaijan were the others.

After Harika, R. Vaishali was the best-placed Indian, with three points, she was in the 15th position, with another seven rounds remaining.

Koneru Humpy, Divya Deshmukh and Vantika Agrawal have some catching up to do.